



Between Involvement and Detachment

The Johnson administration's perception of France, West Germany, and NATO, 1963-1969

Thomassen, Gry

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PhD thesis

Gry Thomasen

Between Involvement and Detachment

The Johnson administration's perceptions of France, West Germany, and NATO, 1963-1969

Supervisor : Associate Professor, Carsten Due-Nielsen
Faculty of Humanities, University of Copenhagen

Co-supervisor: Senior Researcher, Hans Mouritzen
The Danish Institute for International Studies

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Chapter 1 Introduction

On August 13, 1965 Thomas Hughes, the Director of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, stated on the significance of NATO for the US, that

*'The choice for the United States seems to lie between, on the one hand, routinely submitting important foreign policy decisions to the advance scrutiny, comment, and perhaps even modification of its NATO allies, and thus surrendering, if only to a limited extent, its uninhibited freedom of action, and on the other hand, a continuation or even intensification of the lack of political cohesiveness in the Alliance.'*¹ Apparently, the US should either commit to NATO as a further political institution, or retreat into a position of political freedom of action at the expense of alliance cohesion. The choice was essentially between multilateralism and unilateralism.²

Hughes' statement on this choice before the Johnson administration says something about the state of the relations between America and its European allies. In the 1960s something profound and yet unavoidable happened in the relations between America and its European allies. Western Europe had recovered politically and economically from the war, and came to question the American preponderance of power in the alliance³ and the direction of the Atlantic world's policies towards the Eastern bloc. In the 1960s Western Europe realigned vis-à-vis America, and at the same time the so-called Euro-détente emerged, sparked by the dual crisis of 1961-1962; the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Berlin crisis. This development in Western Europe naturally raised questions in Washington about the direction of this new mood in Western Europe, the consequences it had for America at large, and what to do about it.

While Great Britain was considered mainly in line with American viewpoints, NATO, West Germany, and France were at center stage in Washington's thinking, and as the 1960s progressed essential questions emerged from developments in these two states about the future of the transatlantic relations and NATO, which called into question the traditional thinking in these matters. Eventually the Johnson administration was forced by French and West German developments and larger Western European developments to take a stand on the vital matters of what principles NATO should be based on, what purpose did NATO serve, and how to handle the challenges from primarily West Germany and France, but also the rest of the allies.

¹ INR, Aug. 13, 1965. Lyndon Baines Johnson Library (LBJL), NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 23.

² Hughes was unresolved on the question. See Chapter 5.

³ The term preponderance of power is borrowed from Melvyn P. Leffler's indispensable work on the Truman administration's relations with Western Europe, see Leffler (1992)

The challenges from Western Europe, West Germany and France in particular, pertained to the American preponderance or responsiveness in foreign policy matters. This was evident, among other things, in the allies' calls for equality within the alliance, in particular in foreign policy matters. The allies soon realized that equality with the US in nuclear matters was impossible, whereas equality or expanded political consultation and influence on the broader policies and strategy of the alliance were a different matter. This thesis researches American perceptions of and responses to Western European realignments, and departs from the proposition that from the start the US enjoyed a position of unilateralism in the vital foreign policy matters of the Atlantic alliance, and more broadly the Atlantic world. This was evident in the American veto-rights on nuclear matters and the exclusive position of deciding NATO's grand strategy.⁴ It was also however, evident in the *modus operandi* of the post-War transatlantic relationship, namely that the US effectively formulated the Eastern policy of the entire Western bloc, indeed the containment policy was largely accepted by willing Western European governments. By the 1960s this position was challenged by different European allies, among which some called for multilateralist measures in the Atlantic alliance.

I hypothesize that the Johnson administration sought to retain as much of this exclusive position in alliance matters not just as a function of being a superpower including being the sole provider of nuclear protection of Western Europe, but also as a function of a certain Euro-skepticism.

Historically the US have rejected the European reason of state for numerous reasons depending on the circumstances, indeed, the 1930s isolationism was one expression of this rejection. The core of this rejection however, was the perception that from the European reason of state flowed destruction. Thus, there was a need to protect the US from what developed from this reason of state, such as wars.

By the 1960s the alliance with Western Europe was indispensable for America, and as such the necessity of the alliance was never questioned in Washington, however the form of and premises for America's relations with the European allies were. America's behavior in alliance matters and policies towards the allies could, therefore, also be seen on a continuum of involvement and detachment. A policy of involvement towards the European allies was an expression of less Euro-skepticism and therefore a closer involvement in the Alliance. Whereas a policy of detachment towards the allies and the Alliance was based on the rejection of the European reason of state, and depicted a reluctant US that sought to protect its unilateral position in the Alliance.

⁴ Lundestad (2003), p. 10-11.

By researching the transatlantic relations and the alliance on these premises, the broader Cold War serves as a backdrop of the analysis, and as such the present study is an indirect study of America's Cold War policies. The Cold War literature is about the super power relations and the transatlantic relations ranks second in the over-all power game. This may have had more impact on the study of the transatlantic relations than we realize, we may even speak about a super power effect on our methodology, i.e., we exclusively research the transatlantic relations during the Cold War on the premises of the Cold War. It raises the question whether this is a reflection of the reality of the Cold War that the super power relations wiped out all other foreign policy thinking, or if this reflects a truly methodological gap in our research on the Cold War.

Research Question

What was the Johnson administration's interpretation and perception of this movement of realignment? And how did the different branches of policy makers propose to respond? Were the US responses and perceptions of the Western European realignment ultimately involved or detached?

Furthermore, a comparison of the Johnson administration's Western European policies and responses to the Western European realignments to the Nixon administration's policies, is attempted to (possibly) depict if the perceptions of the 1960s and the resulting policies were particular or generic?

Methodological reflections

Scope

The dissertation covers the period from Johnson's entry into the Presidency in 1963 to 1969 and picks up again to compare the Johnson administration's policies, perceptions and interpretations of the Western European realignments with the Nixon-Ford administration's behavior till 1975. The comparison however, is somewhat asymmetric as the analysis of the Johnson administration is based on primary sources and the Nixon-Ford administration is based on the existing literature.

The purpose of the present study is to present a thorough analysis of the Johnson administration's perceptions, policy proposals, and reactions to the Western European realignments that are relevant to characterize these policies and positions with a continuum of involvement and detachment. The Johnson administration's formal policies and the prevailing interpretation and perception of the Western European realignments are therefore not the exclusive subject for analysis, the

many different analyses representing different positions and perceptions, which were carried out in the Department of State and the White House, are equally important. Reports and position papers from other departments and agencies are also included in the analysis insofar these pertained to the concrete political developments in Western Europe, which fall under the rubric realignments, and the response from those departments fall under the subject of political organization of America's relationship with Western Europe. Thus strictly military or economic considerations are not analyzed.

The different Western European government's policies and motivations for these policies are not analyzed in detail; however, Chapter 3 is dedicated to give a general overview of the political setting in Western Europe, and the political developments in France and West Germany in particular.

The analysis is not of a progressive decision-making process that points towards the implementation of specific policy, but rather the analysis is of different interpretations and perceptions, which emerged as a response to specific developments in Western Europe. Although the aim is to give an account of the different interpretations of the Western European realignments in the different policy making branches, primarily the White House and the Department of State, the sources are unequal. The Department of State produced more and more substantive analysis compared to the White House, and there is therefore an overweight of the State Department sources in the analysis.

This asymmetry is inherent and unavoidable, because the foreign policy making was placed in the Department of State. Although the National Security Advisor (NSA) institution in the White House would grow in size during the Johnson presidency, the NSA was not occupied with in depth analysis as the Department of State's specialized bureaus was. Since the purpose of the present study is to give a thorough account of the Johnson administration's different interpretations and not exclusively the formal positions and final policies, it would be expected that there is an overweight of material from the primary foreign policy analyzing department.

In the same manner, the asymmetry in the depth of analysis between the specialized reports from the Department of State and the much 'lighter' position papers from the NSA does not necessarily present a methodological problem in terms of which category of material predicates interpretations better. Indeed any position on a Western European 'incident' or recommendation of a certain response to a Western European occurrence reflects a particular perception and reflects a political position.

The literature on the Johnson administration is very small. There are, in fact, only a few works dedicated to Johnson and his presidency, and

only a single monograph dedicated to the Johnson administration's policy towards Western Europe, namely Thomas Schwartz' monograph *Lyndon Johnson and Europe in the Shadow of Vietnam*. Although Schwartz' book is the fullest account of the transatlantic relations during the Johnson presidency to date, his work cannot be considered exhaustive. Furthermore, Schwartz belongs to the rehabilitative school within the Johnson historiography, a perspective which clearly has an impact on Schwartz' reconstruction of the history. This latter perspective is further discussed in Chapter 2 Historiography.

Therefore, despite Schwartz' book, there is a task of reconstructing America's or rather reconstructing Washington's reading of what happened in these years between America and Western Europe to be able to analyze the Johnson administration's perceptions of the Western European realignments, and the resulting policies. Each chapter begins with a brief overlook of the subject covered in the chapter, and the entire dissertation is chronologically organized. The intention is not to give a full account of what happened between the US and Western Europe in 1963-1969, but is restricted to the account of the American administration's interpretation of the Western European realignments, in particular in West Germany and France.

The Western European Policy Apparatus

The Johnson administration's Western European policy was created among the Department of State's specialized bureaus: the Policy Planning Council (S/P), the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), and the European desk (EUR), and the White House. Dean Rusk, a convinced legalist, headed the Department of State throughout the Kennedy and the Johnson Presidencies (1961-1969).⁵ The Policy Planning Council, which had been established in 1947 by Dean Acheson and under George Kennan's directorship,⁶ was headed by Walt Rostov in 1961-1966 and succeeded by Henry Owen, who held the position until 1969.⁷

The Policy Planning Council was an important branch of the Department of State, which produced in depth analysis, and the Council's reports were substantial and often lengthy amounting to 50 pages or more. The Policy Planning Council members took it upon themselves to investigate and analyze a given development in Western Europe, which they estimated constituted a problem, or potentially a problem. When the Department was called upon to give an account of a

⁵ Brands (1996), p. 5-7.

⁶ Gaddis (2011), p. 265.

⁷ <http://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/people/principalofficers/director-policy-planning>

given problem and present a solution, the reports of the Policy Planning Council was often the foundation for the Department's response. The Council was also sometimes responding to a Presidential direction, a so-called National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM).

In general, the sources from the Policy Planning Council are sources to the entire spectrum of policy-making, both to decisions on a specific Western European policy and the many deliberations and considerations, which flourished in the Council, including those that were discarded. As such the source material from the Council is a valuable source to the different perceptions of Western Europe and America's Western European policy, including the perceptions which were behind specific policy proposal or responses.

The Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) of the Department of State was formally established in 1957 to handle intelligence and research within the State Department. Thomas Lowe Hughes was INR's director during the entire Johnson Presidency. Like the Council INR produced analyses on Western Europe without being commissioned by higher authorities, unless a NSAM called INR to do so. INR's reports were often sent directly to the White House. INR's reports differed from the Council's in mainly two respects. First of all, INR's reports were based on intelligence, and therefore had a different character of being an up-to-the-minute account, and secondly, the reports were also engaged in forecasting future developments. In this sense INR's reports on de Gaulle were highly valued. The reports however, were analytical and substantial, often drawing on recent history. As such INR's reports differed from other intelligence reports. INR's analytical activities were not in conflict with the Council's work.

The sources from INR are particularly revealing of the perceptions of events in Western Europe and the political nature of different Western European states. Contrary to the Council, INR's reports would be exclusively occupied with current and real-time incidents, and seek to explain these, whereas the Council was also occupied with the *longue durée*, which may explain why INR's reports were sent directly to the White House.

The Department of State's European desk (EUR) mostly produced commentaries on current Western European problems and challenges to America's policies. Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs William Tyler was among the chief producers of thoughts on America's European policy.

In the White House Johnson surrounded himself with National Security Advisors (NSAs). Francis Bator was appointed Deputy Special Assistant to Johnson in April 1964 and became Senior National Security Advisor in 1966. Walt Rostow left the position as director of the Policy Planning Council in March 1966 to become Special Assistant for

National Security Affairs to Johnson. Rostow succeeded McGeorge Bundy, who left the White House entirely.

The source material from the White House is primarily position papers or memorandums on current challenges or immediate problems, which also could mean that the White House confronted a long-term decision.

Bator is the main provider of these position papers, and Bator most often presented a problem from different angles and suggested more than one way out. Although the position papers were far from lengthy analyses, they represented different lines of thinking. Rostow on the other hand had a tendency to produce more analytical memos to Johnson, but also summing up the choices of policy before Johnson. The White House material is excellent to reveal the choice of policy and therefore also, if the choice was based on different perceptions, the prevailing perception.

The White House also directed the formulation of policy through the so-called National Security Action Memorandums (NSAMs). A proposal for a NSAM could come from all branches of government; indeed the Department of State initiated some NSAMs but mostly they originated in the White House. NSAMs, in general, are the documents, which state the executive's priority of policy and priority of direction of policy.

The relations between the Department of State and the White House during the Johnson Presidency were unlike the state of the relation when Nixon took over. Rusk enjoyed Johnson's trust and confidence, and the competitive element between the two branches of government was toned down. Rusk was a strong leader of the Department of State, and he managed to balance the relation with the Department of Defense.⁸ This balancing was perhaps not that difficult in the area of Western European policy, because the Secretary of Defense McNamara shared the Department of State's general ideas about Western Europe's political reasoning, and the direction of America's relations with Western Europe. As such Western Europe was hardly as divisive an issue as the Vietnam War.

The Central Intelligence Agency is also represented in the source material, and the mere fact that CIA's reports are found in the White House archive tells something about the importance the White House attached to these reports; indeed, time and again Bator would draw Johnson's attention to one of them. The reports were based on intelligence and preoccupied with forecasting the immediate future, and the sources are mostly useful as insight into the prioritization of what was deemed important knowledge at this particular moment in time, for instance in a December 1966, report about the upcoming NATO

⁸ Brands (1996), p. 9.

ministerial meeting, the CIA hardly touched upon the matter of the Harmel report.

There is no material from the Congress. This is not a reflection of a lack of interest in Western Europe on part of the Congress, but a reflection of the extent of influence Congressional thinking had on the policy-making in either the Department of State or the White House. To the extent Congress is part of the political process in either of these departments; Congressional attitudes are admitted into the analysis.

Discipline

The discipline is international history, which is sometimes referred to as diplomatic history especially in North America. This is a study of foreign policy, i.e., the relations between states, states and organizations, and the premises upon which a given state bases its foreign policy. Therefore, the dissertation is not within the discipline American studies, and the author is not an *Americanist*. The dissertation is not presidential history either. Although the literature that covers the Johnson administration is very much about Lyndon Johnson and his policies, Johnson is not separated from the administration in the present study. Johnson was, like most other Presidents, only human, and therefore his administration's policies and perceptions were exactly that: the administration's. I therefore have no intentions of giving an account of Johnson's personal policies in the foreign policy area since there were no such things. If Johnson had personal policies they laid in the domestic area, such as the Great Society Reforms, thus this dissertation is not a contribution to the presidential Johnson literature.

Terms and definitions

Détente

Détente is a central term for the study of the 1960s and 1970s, and refers to the state of lessening of tensions in the international society. The most important feature is that in this period détente was plural. There was a European détente movement, and there was a – or at least aspirations to – super power détente. Détente however is also a term which raises questions about the nature of the Cold War. Was détente another way of waging the Cold War or was détente the succession of the Cold War and therefore a new condition in international relations? Was the aim with the super power's détente to overcome the Cold War?

The European détente is best understood as an exclusively European effort in the 1960s to *overcome* the Cold War in Europe. The European détente was therefore not exclusively another way of waging the Cold War. It took the form of both nationalistic and common Western European efforts to reach out to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

Realism

The term realism refers to the line of thinking which emerged in Washington at the outset of the Cold War and from which the policy of containment emerged. Indeed, George Kennan, the reluctant father of the containment policy, is among the classical realists. The point of departure was that the nation state was the primary actor in an anarchic international system, in which the balance of power essentially determined the level of stability between states. The Truman administration's decision to enter into an alliance with Western Europe was also a realist construct as it was motivated to balance the Soviet Union. The basic assumption that the loss of power, which presupposes a zero-sum understanding of power, threatened American interests and security in the struggle against Soviet communism was at the undisputed core in the Johnson administration. Realism is referred to as the Cold War paradigm in the dissertation.⁹

Hegemony

The term hegemony is exclusively used in relation to de Gaulle's criticism of the American position in the Alliance and in Western Europe in general. Thus, the term is not used as an analytical tool or to characterize America's position in Western Europe or in the alliance.

Unilateralism

The term unilateralism is an analytical tool, which refers to a certain superpower behavior in foreign policy. Unilateralism is used to describe America's foreign policy behavior as one-sided despite the fact that the US was in an alliance with Western Europe, and the term entails that America's unilateralist behavior was strictly guided by American national interest, thus from the outset with disregard for the European allies' wishes, policies, and interests, indeed, without reciprocity. Often the European allies' interests would coincide with America's unilateralist interest; however, this still amounts to unilateralist state behavior on part of the US.

A common definition of unilateralism is that a '*state opt out of a multilateral framework or act alone in addressing a particular global or regional challenge rather than choosing to participate in collective action*'.¹⁰ In general, states choose unilateralism to protect the freedom of action in foreign policy or because the principles, which a multilateral institution embodies are found inimical to national interest.¹¹

⁹ See Crockatt (1995) for a historian's perception of realism.

¹⁰ Malone & Khoong (2003), p. 3.

¹¹ Ibid.

In the present study there is a certain corollary to American unilateralism, a corollary of self-protection against Western Europe's policies and behavior in the international community, which reveals itself during the 1960s. In this period the US could resort to the protection of its unilateralist position and indeed act unilaterally to protect US interests at large because of reluctance of entanglement with Western Europe. This corollary of self-protection was grounded in the historic circumstances and historically based perception of Europe, Europe's reason of state, and political culture. Indeed, the rejection of the European reason of state was founded by George Washington, and it had found different expressions throughout the centuries; the 1930s isolationism was one expression of this.¹² The urge to protect American interests and foreign policy from Europe was grounded in this fear of entanglement, and it had acquired a new dimension in the Cold War's overall antagonism when independent Western European states could rock the boat.¹³

Multilateralism

Ruggie defines multilateralism with a reference to the very broad definition Keohane puts forward,¹⁴ that multilateralism is '*not merely that it coordinates national policies in groups of three or more states, which is something other organizational forms also do, but that it does so on the basis of certain principles of ordering relations among those states.*'¹⁵ These principles have a certain character, such as principles of collective security, and are '*'generalized' principles of conduct – that is, principles which specify appropriate conduct for a class of actions, without regard to the particularistic interests of the parties or the strategic exigencies that may exist in a specific occurrence.*'¹⁶

This definition of multilateralism and the governing principles for this multilateralism also entails, according to Ruggie, that the matter, which the parties decide to form a multilateral institution for, necessarily must be indivisible. Collective security's matter is peace, and peace is indivisible for the parties to a collective security organization. In the same manner Ruggie argues, in line with Keohane, that members of a multilateral institution expect an even distribution of benefits in the long haul and yield certain (diffuse) equality among the members. Keohane terms this 'diffuse reciprocity'.¹⁷

Multilateralism thus becomes a very specific concept, which must not be confused with diplomacy and other terms that refers to cooperation

¹² On the 1930s isolationism see Jonas (1966); Osgood (1953).

¹³ See Washington's Farewell Address of 1796; etc.

¹⁴ Keohane (1998), p. 731.

¹⁵ Ruggie (1992), p. 567.

¹⁶ Ruggie (1992), p. 571.

¹⁷ Ibid. p. 571.

among states. Multilateralism entails coordination of state behavior on the basis of certain principles of conduct, which is institutionalized in rules or consensus procedures.¹⁸ The development of consensus procedures on the relations with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union was the hallmark of the development of NATO in the 1960s.

Involvement and detachment continuum

I suggest that US behavior towards Western Europe during this period should be seen as a continuum stretching from involvement to detachment.¹⁹ Involvement describes the situation in which the US committed itself to the principles of the Alliance uncontaminated by the Euro-skepticism, which was embodied in the historically based rejection of the European reason of state. At the other end of the continuum detachment describes the situation when the US detached itself from Western Europe in the alliance as a result of Euro-skepticism deriving from the rejection of the European reason of state, and instead maintained a unilateralist position. A policy of detachment does therefore not refer to a complete withdrawal from the Alliance or a retreat into isolationism. Indeed, the US remained member of the Alliance.

The European reason of state refers to America's perception of the wrongfulness of the principles, which Europe's foreign policies have been based on in the pre-World War II period. The balance of power system, temporary and shifting alliances, and secret diplomacy were all principles for foreign policy conduct that the New World rejected as faulty, dangerous, and foreign to republican institutions and American interests. The European reason of state concepts thus extends beyond 'power politics', as the concept seeks to encapsulate a certain value that has been attached to Europe's capabilities in foreign policy. Historically different administrations have believed that this behavior in foreign policy, a certain European variant of power politics, was driven by faulty motives of national interests.²⁰ Like previous administrations, the Johnson administration identified a European reason of state in the principles and motivations, the administration believed were behind the different Western European foreign policies and the foreign policy conduct.

Bilateralism

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 574.

¹⁹ I am inspired by the title of Norbert Elias' article 'Problems of Involvement and Detachment' from 1956, and not the contents.

²⁰ See for instance Washington's Farewell Address; Jefferson's First Inaugural Address in 1801 *ibid*; The Monroe Doctrine, *ibid*; Wilson's 14 points, or Arthur Vandenberg's deliberations of the 1930s. All can be found at 1796 <http://avalon.law.yale.edu>

Bilateralism is not used as an analytical term in the present study. However, bilateralism is used by the Johnson administration, and as such bilateralism exclusively refers to the practice of Western Europe to have contacts of trade and culture with different states across the iron curtain specifically ‘outside’ the Atlantic framework and outside American control. This is covered in particular in Chapter 6.

Perceptions

When using the term perceptions it refers to the understanding of a certain phenomenon, which could be based on certain foreign policy strands, such as isolationism or realism. The term does not refer to political psychology that talks about *how* the policy makers perceive certain events, such as analogical reasoning.²¹ The dissertation merely seeks to identify certain foreign policy philosophies in the perceptions of Western European realignments.

Between Cold War and Détente

The Johnson Presidency covered a unique period in between the 1940s and 1950s confrontationist state behavior and the 1970s détente between the super powers. The Johnson administration is best described as ‘the aspirational’ administration between Cold War and détente.²²

The administration pursued aspirational détente with the Soviet Union, while at the same time it upheld a very traditional view of the Soviet Union’s outlook; indeed the administration repeated over and over that the Soviet outlook had not changed, despite the Kremlin’s peaceful co-existence concept. In the end the aspirations for a détente with the Soviet Union was crowned with the Non Proliferation Treaty signed by the Soviet Union, America, and the United Kingdom in July, 1968. The aspirational détente was indeed aspirational. The planned strategic arms limitations talks stranded as the Soviet Union invaded Prague in August, 1968. The Johnson administration also developed aspirations for an opening to China in the latter half of the 1960s. The Johnson administration successfully managed to denuclearize (to some extent) NATO’s grand strategy with the adoption of flexible response in December, 1967.²³

The Johnson administration also presided over a period in which the globalized and militarized containment of NSC 68 cracked. The imperial overstretch indeed showed itself, putting strains on the American

²¹ For an excellent theory development and study of analogical reasoning in the American administrations in 1950s and 1960s see Khong (1992)

²² I borrow the term ‘aspirational’ from John Dumbrell, who characterizes Johnson’s détente policy as aspirational.

²³ For more on US-USSR relations see Dumbrell (2004).

economy, and perhaps more important straining the strength of the Cold War paradigm, which had successfully guided America's foreign and security policy since the Truman administration. In the beginning of Johnson's presidency the Vietnam War had the support of the Congress and the American public, but as the 1960s progressed (and there was no victory in sight), the Cold War paradigm and the domino theory lost its explanatory force both in Europe and in America. In 1968 after the Tet Offensive, the Johnson administration began the so-called 'Vietnamization' of the war. The war in Vietnam is often cited as the sole reason for Johnson's decision not to run for another term in office.²⁴

By the time Nixon entered the White House, the Johnson administration's many aspirations towards the Soviet Union and China had paved the way for the détente of 1970-1975. Indeed the Nixon administration commenced the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks in November, 1969, and ended in May, 1972, with the SALT1. The Nixon administration opened to China in 1972. The Vietnam War was also terminated as the US withdrew in 1973 when the Paris Peace accords were signed.

²⁴ For more on the strength and weakness of the Cold War paradigm see Brands (1996); and more on the Vietnam War, US, and the USSR see Dumbrell (2004).

Chapter 2 Historiography

Beyond Vietnam

The literature on Lyndon Johnson's policies towards Europe is, perhaps not surprisingly, very small.²⁵ Not until the 1990s did historians, primarily American historians, discover Johnson's European policies, and a whole new field of study the so-called beyond Vietnam historiography emerged. The beyond Vietnam historiography covers all policy areas beyond Vietnam, and only a single monograph is dedicated to the Johnson administration's relations with Western Europe.²⁶ In fact, the Johnson administration's relations with and policies towards Eastern Europe are yet to be studied. However, in the brief period from the mid-1990s up till today the appraisal of Johnson has undergone substantial change, ranging from a critical account of Johnson's (and his administration's) abilities and foreign policies to a far more positive account of Johnson's skills and policies.

The beyond Vietnam literature takes its point of departure in the changing circumstances in the 1960s. Europe rebelled against super power dominium in Europe, China tested a nuclear bomb in 1964, and the crisis year, 1961-1962, had set new standards for the super power relation. In general, the literature recognizes that the world-balance changed and America's place in the world was challenged by these changes during Johnson's presidency. Not surprisingly therefore is the exclusive parameter for the appraisal of Johnsonian policies measured against the administration's ability to handle this changing setting. Central to this approach is the position of the Cold War paradigm in the administration, i.e., the strength or weakness of traditional Cold War thinking is believed to be able to explain Johnsonian foreign policy. Quite misleading the Vietnam War also has a place in the beyond Vietnam literature. It reflects how American scholars, at least, still consider the war in South East Asia of prime importance to any Johnsonian foreign policy including the Western European policies. Although the beyond Vietnam scholars all reject the traditional assumption, that Vietnam overshadowed every other policy area – to the extent that the Johnson administration neglected and mistreated other areas – Vietnam is central for an understanding of American foreign policies during Johnson's presidency. I believe these scholars are right when claiming the Vietnam War influenced other policy areas, however, that also goes the other way round and, in fact, foreign policy during the Cold War is rarely divided into exclusive areas that are untouched by

²⁵ As of October 2012 there are two monographs and two anthologies that cover the Johnson administration.

²⁶ Schwartz (2003).

developments, circumstances, and other areas of policy, by the 1960s the Cold War was, indeed, globalized.²⁷

The Cold War Paradigm, Europe, and Vietnam

In his largely interview based monograph *Wages of Globalism* (1996) Hal Brands has a rather apologetic and rehabilitative approach, claiming that LBJ's non-Vietnam policies were sound and whatever flaws these policies may have had, was largely explained by circumstances, which Johnson had little or no influence on.

Brands' point of departure is that Johnson and his administration to a large extent inherited a foreign policy, and at the same time happened to preside over the end of American hegemony. The Truman doctrine had, according to Brands, committed America globally, and Kennedy had committed America even further to the defense of South Vietnam.²⁸ Johnson however, aspired to reform America with his Great Society program, but had to defend what others had created – others included the foreign policy staff that he inherited.²⁹ Given that the tides were changing and America no longer had hegemonic might and wealth, LBJ was unlucky to be the president who came to oversee this transformation of America's position in the world.

Brands identifies two principles for LBJ's foreign policy. The first was the far from unusual tendency of sustaining the international status quo, thus expressing the Cold War paradigm's position in the administration. However, LBJ wanted to sustain the status quo to '*foster a revolution in American domestic affairs*'.³⁰ Brands further identifies a second principle for LBJ's foreign policies namely that all politics was local politics. Johnson knew that congressional and public support for America's foreign policy was important, and with his aspiration for extensive domestic reform, a common front in foreign policy was necessary. Therefore, LBJ developed what Brands terms the 'line of least political resistance' in foreign policy.³¹ Johnson would choose the foreign policy that had least resistance in Congress, which is one reason why the Cold War paradigm was maintained and why the Vietnam War had

²⁷ NSC68 of 1950s demanded a global, militarized commitment to fight communism.

²⁸ The Vietnam War is obviously a large subject. However, within the recent decade or so, Kennedy has been ascribed responsibility for Americanizing the war, and not Johnson. Johnson is instead responsible for the escalation of the war. See Dobson & Marsh (2006).

²⁹ Brands (1996), p. 4.

³⁰ Ibid. p. 28.

³¹ Ibid. p. 262p. This aspect of Johnsonian policy has all the other Beyond Vietnam historians adopted. Thus, this aspect is a central intentional explanation of LBJ's foreign policies.

Congressional backing.³² That did not mean, however, that Johnson subordinated foreign policy to that of domestic policy, but that LBJ consistently viewed foreign policy within the context of his domestic ambitions and policies.³³

Johnson's policies towards Western Europe were, according to Brands, conducted in the same faith. Moreover, Johnson genuinely believed in global containment, that Europe was important to American security and world peace, and as Europe, due to economic recovery, moved in a new direction the US had to follow. Brands argues that in the midst of de Gaulle's withdrawal of France from NATO's integrated command, Britain and Germany's offset troubles, LBJ managed to both restore the Atlantic alliance, and battle the neo-isolationist sentiment at home.³⁴ Johnson did not need, according to Brands, a debate about America's commitment to Western Europe either in America or in Europe that would disturb the domestic program. Brands also argues that there were a certain limit to de Gaulle's impact, when he states that: 'de Gaulle pursued policies that would have seemed challenging if practiced by a avowed enemy, but appeared intolerable in an ally.'³⁵ Brands thus puts forward a picture of Johnson's European policies as somewhat reactive to changing circumstances in Europe.

Concluding that LBJ's policies towards France, Britain and Germany was conducted with an eye to the limits of American power and therefore generally successful, contrary to his Vietnam policies, which were conducted without an eye to the same limits, Brands argues that under the circumstances, i.e., the challenges presented to America either from Western Europe or the US (neo-isolationism) Johnson did a good job. However, the 'discrepancy' between LBJ's disastrous Vietnam policy and the other generally successful foreign policies is largely explained by what constituted American national interest. The Western European policy (and other non-Vietnam policies) were successful because they were conducted according to the line of least resistance, which were 'not seriously [in] conflict' with American national interests. Furthermore, in any other areas than Vietnam it was still meaningful to conduct policies that sought to sustain the status quo. Brands sees this as partly good luck, but also as a token of the fundamentally well-functioning political system in America. Although the Vietnam policies were conducted also according to the line of least resistance, they utterly failed exactly because a status quo policy in relation to Vietnam was not feasible.³⁶

³² Ibid. Conclusions. Congress approved and supported the war in Vietnam. According to Brands no other president had sent American troops into war and asked congress for permission, thus, according to Brands, was the war America's and not just LBJ's.

³³ Ibid. p. 260.

³⁴ Ibid. p. 107-109.

³⁵ Ibid. p. 88.

³⁶ Ibid. pp. 259-264.

In Brands' narrative the Cold War paradigm's ability to mobilize public and political opinion for a protracted Cold War policy is central. As long as the central interests were sustaining the status quo, the paradigm proved effective, and for LBJ it was easier to follow the path of least resistance to secure a policy that safeguarded American interests. However, when American interests changed as in the case of Vietnam, it would have demanded an enormous effort to overcome that exact paradigm, which had been developed and gained momentum over that last two decades. Therefore, concludes Brands, did LBJ's successes and single failure say something about a democracy's capacity to devise foreign policy, in fact, concludes Brands *'To have asked Johnson to do better would have been to ask the American political system to do better'*.³⁷ The Cold War paradigm is therefore, to Brands, the guilty party.

In his contribution *LBJ, Germany, and the End of the Cold War* to the anthology *Lyndon Johnson Confronts the World* (1994) Frank Costigliola also argues that the Johnson administration was locked in the Cold War paradigm, and that this to a large extent explains the administration's policies towards Western Europe and West Germany. Accordingly, Costigliola argues that the Johnson administration and LBJ himself believed that Western alliance served a triple purpose, in the tradition of the 1940s, namely deter the Soviet Union, contain Germany, and as a vehicle for the US to orchestrate the Western alliance's policies.³⁸

Costigliola identifies a key challenge for the Johnson administration's foreign policies namely to *'tranquillize, co-opt, or otherwise manage West Germany's "will" for security, reunification, and equality'* all because, according to Costigliola, the Johnson administration perceived this as a threat to the stability of Europe, exactly because Johnson and his advisors had a traditional perception, based on the Munich analogy, of Germany.³⁹ In fact, according to Costigliola, Johnson extended the administration's patronizing attitude beyond Germany, and in general, the administration had difficulties with considering the allies' interests and points of view as serious and legitimate exactly because they were trapped in traditional thinking.

Costigliola argues that the Multilateral Force (MLF) and the bridge building policy of 1966 were the two primary policies towards Europe. The MLF was largely a concept designated during the Johnson administration to both tie the Germans down and direct European integration. However, the MLF was at the end of the day obstructed by primarily de Gaulle and the appeal de Gaulle's 'Europeanism' had throughout Western Europe, and is therefore, according to Costigliola, a

³⁷ Ibid. p. 263.

³⁸ Costigliola in Cohen & Tucker (1994), p. 174. "channeling the energies of the allies into constructive enterprises designated by the US".

³⁹ Ibid p. 174-175.

token of exactly how difficult it was for the US to orchestrate European integration, and how traditional Cold War schemes no longer fitted the changed circumstances in Europe in the 1960s. The Johnson administration backed down from the MLF proposal; however, according to Costigliola the administration did it in a traditional, manipulative manner trying to blame the failure of the MLF on the European allies.⁴⁰

The European realignments culminated with de Gaulle's withdrawal from NATO's integrated command in March 1966, and de Gaulle managed to break alliance unity and 'solidity of ... the Cold War', and thereby sat in motion West German, British, and American contacts with Eastern Europe.⁴¹ Costigliola thus characterizes the Johnson administration's Eastern European policy as quite reactionary. Although Costigliola recognizes that the Johnson administration's bridge building policy was about Eastern Europe and Soviet Union, and also about ending the Cold War, Costigliola holds out that bridge building policy was immediately about bridge the Western Europeans, the alliance, and preserve the privileged position for the US to direct and decide policies on behalf of the entire alliance. Moreover, the US sought to promote détente exactly within the alliance with just the same rationale as had been Truman's when creating the alliance in 1948-1949,⁴² namely to contain communism. The shift in tactics from Cold War to détente, concludes Costigliola, ultimately failed during Johnson's presidency, because these policies were restricted by the Cold War discourse.⁴³ Costigliola argues that the Vietnam War undercut the possibility of making peace with communists in Europe, and undercut the possibility to make the desired reforms. The US Congress refused to grant LBJ his expanded trade relations with the Eastern bloc, because the legislators and their constituents refused trading with the enemy, and without this '*the bridges between East and West were built on sand*'.⁴⁴

Contrary to Costigliola and Brands, Thomas Schwartz argues in his monograph *Lyndon Johnson and Europe in the Shadow of Vietnam* (2003) that Johnson and his administration succeeded with his European policies largely because Johnson was an able practitioner of alliance politics, and had a clear vision for the end of the Cold War, thus implying a break away from the Cold War paradigm. Schwartz argues that Johnson's personal policy preferences mattered little since the very structure of the American security state pushed America into European questions, and since Europe was the 'most significant area of the world for American

⁴⁰ Ibid p. 179-192.

⁴¹ Ibid p. 193.

⁴² Ibid p. 193-194.

⁴³ Ibid p. 210.

⁴⁴ Ibid p. 207.

interests during the Cold War',⁴⁵ the management of the alliance was not only the most important task for a US President but also, retrospectively, the effective maintenance of the alliance was the primary reason why the US prevailed '*peacefully in the Cold War*'.⁴⁶ If the Johnson presidency is seen from that perspective, Schwartz argues, the Vietnam War has a less dominant position in Johnson's foreign policy record. Furthermore, Schwartz argues that the Johnson administration introduced détente, which is normally ascribed to Nixon, as the bridge building policy, the non-proliferation treaty, and the foundered summit meeting in 1968 all were tokens of according to Schwartz. Schwartz characterizes Johnson's policies as détente as a lever to rehabilitate Johnson, thus reflecting how détente has reached a prominent position in the Cold War historiography within recent years.

It is possible for Schwartz to hypothesize about the importance of the alliance to effectively rehabilitate Johnson, which, indeed, is his errand, because the 1960s witnessed the European realignments. In general, Schwartz paints a bleak picture of a recalcitrant Western Europe that Johnson and his administration managed in order to sustain the Atlantic alliance and Western unity. Thus, according to Schwartz, Western Europe challenged the alliance during the Johnson presidency. The crisis year and the subsequent "tense stability" led to a lesser present threat from the USSR in Europe, which in turn led the US to worry more about alliance cohesion and the prospects for instability in Europe. Moreover, Johnson's détente effort with the USSR had an unraveling effect on the alliance. The scene was therefore set in this study for Johnson to manage Western Europe.

Schwartz argues that Johnson's policy towards the Soviet Union was both a continuation of Kennedy's policies and inspired by Roosevelt, accordingly, Johnson sought to improve the relation with the Soviet Union and lessen the threat of nuclear war. This perspective had a far more central role in Johnson's foreign policy that hitherto recognized, according to Schwartz.⁴⁷ LBJ's European policy was therefore in effect guided by two component parts: first maintain and nourish the alliance and second improve the relation with the Soviet Union also to avoid nuclear war. Arguably neither of these components are exclusively Johnsonian, i.e., which President has not sought to avoid nuclear war and maintain the western alliance during the Cold War? But the method to accomplish this may have been somewhat new.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ Schwartz (2003), Prelude.

⁴⁷ Schwartz (2003), p. 17-20.

⁴⁸ Schwartz's claims about a special Johnsonian quest to avoid nuclear war is somewhat shattered as the National Security Archive in December 2012 revealed that Johnson directed his administration to uphold the standing order to respond with nuclear

LBJ's relation with and handling of the West Germans followed a far more linear, developing course than Costigliola's ad hoc 'damage control'. According to Schwartz, Johnson believed that détente was the only way to an eventual German reunification, and therefore decided to push the Germans towards détente.⁴⁹ Although Schwartz is careful not to give Johnson the honors of the German *Ostpolitik* he argues that Johnson paved the way.⁵⁰

The president which Schwartz portrays is arguably more proactive and enterprising than the one Brands and Costigliola present. Thus, the Johnson administration replaced the MLF with the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) and the Non-proliferation treaty (NPT) during the 1960s. However this was brought about because the administration needed an apparatus to handle the German concerns about being treated on equal footing with the rest of the allies.⁵¹ Schwartz argues that LBJ and his administration naturally saw Germany as the primary ally, however, the overall détente effort meant that the US-German relation needed to be altered, and that, according to Schwartz, had to be conducted without losing Germany in the process, maintain the alliance, and the Western orientation of Germany. Overall, Johnson succeeded in this endeavor.⁵²

The French withdrawal from NATO's integrated command presented, according to Schwartz, Johnson with an opportunity to both "assume" the role as a statesman and rally the alliance behind his leadership with end goal of reforming the alliance. Thus LBJ pursued a 'line of restraint' in his dealings with de Gaulle contrary to what most of the political establishment in Washington argued for, and grabbed the opportunity to 'solve many alliance-related issues' including moving the alliance towards détente with the East, adopting the flexible response doctrine, solve the nuclear sharing problem, binding the alliance closer together, and at the same time '*hold an olive branch out to the French*'.⁵³ Schwartz argues that the détente with the East was given 'intuitional weight' with NSAM 345, which Schwartz quotes LBJ for considering moving the allies closer together and exploring a détente with the East as the 'important thing' to do in the wake of de Gaulle's actions. However, the NSAM 345 was entitled 'nuclear planning' and aimed at solving the nuclear problem in the alliance, and then in a last paragraph Johnson

attacks in both the USSR and China in the event of a President disappearing or killed. See <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb406/>.

⁴⁹ This was a break from the Hallstein Doctrine's premise that a solution to the European problem would follow a solution to the German problem.

⁵⁰ Ibid. footnote 146 p. 284.

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 52.

⁵² Ibid. Conclusions.

⁵³ Ibid. p. 105-111.

directed his staff to consider the matters Schwartz claims were the 'important'.⁵⁴

Schwartz in effect puts forward that on one hand LBJ was driven by his interest of moving towards détente, and on the other hand recognized that in every aspect of policy (in Europe) the US had to pay 'scrupulous attention ... to German interests and sensitivities' and had to savior the alliance, thus it is hardly possible to argue there were no amount of classic Cold War thinking in Johnson.⁵⁵

LBJ announced his vision for Europe and the bridge building policy in October 1966. Schwartz argues that this vision for 'making Europe whole again' – as the speech was termed - was an important milestone in the Cold War.⁵⁶ In the speech Johnson put forward his vision for German reunification, détente and deterrence, and the development of East-West relations. Schwartz characterizes bridge building policy as the better choice by arguing that it peacefully undermined the various communist systems by reaching out and putting Western life forward, an outcome a more militant approach hardly could have produced.⁵⁷ The Harmel exercise is also treated in Schwartz' largely entrepreneurial interpretation of LBJ, accordingly the Harmel report's recommendations was a 'triumph for American diplomacy', also because the French did not withdraw from the drafting, and generally Schwartz argues that the report affirmed LBJ's approach to the East-West conflict, which he had outlined in the October 7, 1966 speech.⁵⁸

The Vietnam War also has a place in Schwartz' study, mostly a place in which he highlights exactly how little *realpolitischer* effect the war had on the US-European relation, and the US-USSR relation. Schwartz claims that the record shows no decisive effect of the Vietnam War upon the European policies, and he argues that even the Soviets eventually came to the negotiation table on the NPT despite the war. Schwartz hypothesize, in fact, that LBJ "gambled" - and won - that fighting a limited war in Vietnam would both enable him to achieve his Great Society reforms without a destructive domestic right-wing accusation of "who lost Vietnam", and at the same time proceed with ' "thawing" the Cold War in Europe' and thereby 'demonstrating to the communist world that he was prepared to live in peace where the lines between the two sides were clear', quite contrary to Costigliola's assessment of the proportionate relation between the war and foreign policy.⁵⁹ By putting this concept of limited war forward as a guiding principle for LBJ's policy as a precondition for

⁵⁴ NSAM 345

<http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/nsams/nsam345.asp>

⁵⁵ Schwartz (2003), p. 110-111.

⁵⁶ Ibid. Conclusions.

⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 230-31.

⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 213.

⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 235-36.

him to obtain both a détente and domestic reform, Schwartz in fact assign the war quite an influence on America's policies.

Thus Schwartz presents LBJ and his administration as rather innovative in the foreign policy field and leaves very little room for a dynamic transatlantic relation, and is in opposition to the détente literature that argues that the European détente was a European endeavor and not an American.⁶⁰

John Dumbrell agrees with Schwartz and Costigliola that the LBJ administration had a détente agenda, and argues in his work *Lyndon Johnson and Soviet Communism* (2004) that the Johnson administration did reach important *progress* towards a sustained détente with the Soviet Union. However, Dumbrell characterizes the Johnsonian détente as aspirational: “*the hoped for achievement of a vocabulary and lexicon of mutual understanding between the superpowers, a way of resolving confrontation, avoiding nuclear war and allowing regional disputes (even wars) to proceed without drawing Moscow and Washington into direct confrontation*”.⁶¹ By a step by step approach to ease tensions, the Johnson administration sought bilateral agreements,⁶² however the 1965 escalation of Vietnam War caused a break down in the bilateral relation, and it took the escalating Sino-Soviet rift and a renewed American initiative, i.e., bridge building, to resume the détente agenda.

Dumbrell recognizes that at the same time as Johnson pursued aspirational détente in the bilateral relation between Moscow and Washington, an exclusive European détente was going on. Both France and Germany had their own détente agendas, which Dumbrell claims is proof of exactly how complex the international society was in the 1960s. The European détente was therefore the context for an American détente in Europe.⁶³ Dumbrell thereby runs somewhat counter to Schwartz's view that the US had a certain impact on the development of the European détente, the German in particular. However, Dumbrell agrees with Schwartz' claim that the ‘*health of NATO was of paramount importance*’.⁶⁴ Therefore the 1966 bridge building policies was also about disciplining the allies and reviving the alliance.⁶⁵

Dumbrell concludes that Johnsonian aspirational détente was not (probably) thought in terms ‘transcending’ or end the Cold War (even though Dumbrell does not rule out the possibility that some in the

⁶⁰ The Harmel exercise for instance was of European origin and it is possible to argue that the allies influenced American thinking and not the other way round as Schwartz does.

⁶¹ Dumbrell (2004), p. 24.

⁶² On trade, defense spending, the production of nuclear fissile material etc. Ibid, p. 34-39.

⁶³ Ibid, p. 24.

⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 25.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 166.

administration indeed believed it was possible), but rather Johnsonian détente was a way to pursue the rivalry with the Soviet Union in ‘*a way which recognized the reality of intersecting US-Soviet interests and the possibility of partnership*’.⁶⁶ Dumbrell in other words subscribe to the notion that détente was just another way of fighting the Cold War, and thereby runs counter with both Costigliola’s and Schwartz’ perceptions that the Johnsonian détente, in fact, was thought of as a way to end the Cold War.

The European détente

The point of departure for most literature on the European détente is that the European détente predated and outlasted the American counterpart, and more recently, as the Cold War did in fact end, the European détente is attributed significance for the end of the war. The European détente, in fact, is one reason why the Cold War ended.⁶⁷ This places the rehabilitative Johnson literature on the defense as these scholars argue that LBJ from the moment he took over the presidency in November 1963 followed a détente policy towards the Soviet Union, whether aspirational, petite, or full blown, i.e. prior to the European détente. Furthermore, the rehabilitation literature runs counter to the position that the European détente in the 1960s was an exclusive European effort, which the US eventually came to support. And finally, Schwartz’ hypothesis on NATO and the end of the Cold War also somewhat counters the European détente literature.

The study of the European détente has recently been put on the research agenda, notably by European historians. In *The Cambridge History of the Cold War Volume II Crisis and Détente* (2011) edited by Westad and Leffler stretches the period of crisis and then détente 1962 to 1975. Jussi Hanhimäki argues in his contribution *Détente in Europe 1962-1975* that the European détente was a European project, a European response to “*the twin crisis in 1961-1962*”, and it began and continued in Europe, even though both superpowers’ influence in Europe should not be overlooked. Hanhimäki argues that Germany was the heart of the Cold War division of Europe, and that the German unification marked the end of the European Cold War, and therefore “*something profound*” did take place in the status of Germany as a result of *Ostpolitik*. Indeed Hanhimäki claims that *Ostpolitik* “ushered” the era of détente.⁶⁸

Even though the European détente had many forms, mostly nationalistic such as Gaullism, Hanhimäki argues that Europeans in general, agreed to the need for improved relations between East and West, and that this ‘*new era in European politics*’ culminated with the CSCE

⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 183.

⁶⁷ Garthoff (1985); Villaume & Westad (2010); Leffler and Westad (eds.) (2011).

⁶⁸ Hanhimäki in Westad and Leffler (2010), p. 198.

process, which ended 'Europe's postwar era'.⁶⁹ Hanhimäki claims that Germany and *Ostpolitik* pertained to more than just the German-German relation, in fact, had it not been for the West German openings to the East, the process of increased exchanges across the iron curtain that eventually led to the CSCE, would not have been successful.⁷⁰

Hanhimäki, in other words, argues that Germany and the German *Ostpolitik* had far more influence on the East-West relation than de Gaulle's Gaullism. Gaullism only reached decisive importance when associated with West Germany.⁷¹ Hanhimäki's counterfactual claim that Germany's opening to the East was somehow a premise for the CSCE reflects a certain great power approach or even a germanophile approach, to this particular history. However, it could be argued that it was a *united* Western Europe, and not a single great power that had decisive importance for the increase in exchanges across the iron curtain? Or put another way, would there have been a successful increase if only Germany participated?

In Westad's and Villaume's (eds.) anthology *Perforating the Iron Curtain* (2010) the editors argue much in line with Hanhimäki, that '*the pan-European détente and the CSCE processes in the 1970s contributed in significant ways to the developments that led to the end of the Cold War in the 1980s*'.⁷²

It is argued that the pan-European détente emerged from the revitalization of France and West Germany in the mid-1960s and outlasted 'the deep freeze' in the super power relation at least up till 1985. Although Western Europe served as a vehicle for the détente, Eastern Europe was also decisive for the durability of euro-détente. In the anthology scholars seek to answer why the European détente 'proved lasting', and three reasons are presented, and in line with Hanhimäki's argument Germany is considered crucial.

According to the editors Villaume and Westad, the egalitarian Western Europe attracted Eastern Europe, and signaled that the choice was no longer one between capitalism, i.e., the US, and communism, i.e. the Soviet Union. Secondly, West Germany came to accept the 'historical and territorial boundaries', which the Second World War had left Germany with, and the subsequent 'readjustment' was crucial. This process of readjustment started even before 1966 and the Great Coalition. The editors argue that Germany's 'remarkable turnabout' presented a whole new picture of Germany as no longer 'autarchic' but a promoter of cooperation between East and West. Lastly the editors argue that the '*durability of the alliance relationships between Western Europe and*

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 212.

⁷¹ This aspect is also put forward by Schwartz (2003).

⁷² Hanhimäki in Westad and Leffler (2010).

the United States’ created more European influence in the alliance, and therefore improved the ‘cohesion on key strategic aims’.⁷³

In general, the Euro-détente literature fails to consider the transatlantic relation much further than the above; however, in Western Europe the détente was indeed, accompanied by a greater call for equality in the alliance and more broadly speaking in the Atlantic partnership. The Western European realignments and the demand for equality, which was not just promoted by de Gaulle, was an equally important development in Western European politics.

The Transatlantic Relation

The study of the transatlantic alliance has been somewhat neglected throughout the history of the Cold War. As argued in the Introduction the focus on the super power relation may have had methodological spillover on our methodology, i.e., the transatlantic relation has hardly been studied, indeed, there are only four monographs on the transatlantic relation.⁷⁴

Geir Lundestad’s monograph *The United States and Western Europe since 1945 From ‘Empire’ by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift* (2003) was and still is the principal work on the transatlantic relation. Lundestad sets out to study the transatlantic relation and focus on the ‘overall issue’ of cooperation versus conflict in the relation between America and Western Europe a measure most scholars use to understand the dynamics of the transatlantic relation. Lundestad also wishes to extend his 1986 ‘empire’ by invitation thesis,⁷⁵ namely that the Western European governments shortly after the end of the Second World War issued invitations to America to become an ‘empire’, which others usually refer to as the American hegemony in Europe as Brands does⁷⁶

Lundestad bases his invitation thesis on two arguments. On one hand, the US emerged from the war as something almost beyond a Great Power, indeed, never before in history had a Great Power had ‘*such a vast lead over its potential competitors*’,⁷⁷ according to Lundestad. Based on this power, the US expanded its influence in most parts of the world, most notably in Western Europe. The reasons behind this expansion were many, including and most important America’s security interests in

⁷³ Villaume & Westad (2010), p. 7-10.

⁷⁴ Grosser (1975); Barnet (1983). Neither of these is considered in this chapter. The other two Lundestad (2003) and Hanhimäkki (2012) are presented in this chapter.

⁷⁵ Lundestad “‘Empire’ by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952” in *Journal of Peace Studies*, vol. 23, nr. 3, (1986).

⁷⁶ Lundestad (2003), Introduction.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

containing Soviet communism and containing Germany. The US organized its empire within the framework of American values. On the other hand, the Western European governments invited the Americans in because they needed economic assistance for reconstruction, political support in their fight against European communism, and lastly Western Europe needed a military guarantee against Soviet attacks.⁷⁸ The US accepted the invitations, according to Lundestad, because the US was still achieving '*crucial objectives of its own*'.⁷⁹ From this emerged a strong Atlantic structure, which was remarkably stable, according to Lundestad, however the balance tipped in favor of Western Europe during the late 1950s, indeed the American 'role' declined in Western Europe from the late 1950s to the end of the Cold War.

One token of the American 'empire' was, according to Lundestad, that whereas the US always favored European integration, American insistence on US sovereignty (indeed the US was an 'empire') precluded any talk about Atlantic integration, accordingly this explains why those parts of NATO that were '*binding even on the US had to reflect rather exclusively American ideas*'.⁸⁰ According to Lundestad this was the reason behind NATO's adoption of different strategies, such as MAD or flexible response.⁸¹ The European allies were, in fact, against the latter. In general, Lundestad's thesis is a critique of the revisionist school of thought, which claims the US was the primary and most active party in the Cold War. Indeed, Lundestad's most heralded contribution to the Cold War literature is his claim that Western Europe was the primary instigator of the military alliance; NATO.

Lundestad cites the 'dramatic' shifts in economic prosperity as the primary reason for a general shift in the balance between the US and Western Europe,⁸² and although he claims his work covers the period 1945 – 2001, the Johnson administration (1963-1969) is exclusively covered in a chapter dedicated to de Gaulle's challenge. And even in this chapter, the focus is mostly on the Kennedy administration's Gaullist challenge. The point of departure for the (early) French crisis was, according to Lundestad, the clearly opposing schemes for Europe that de Gaulle and Kennedy had. The Grand Design contradicted de Gaulle's European Europe. However, it was not until the Elysee Treaty was signed in January, 1963, that the Kennedy administration went into some kind of 'shock', prior to this de Gaulle's veto of British entry into the EC had 'distressed' the administration. Lundestad argues that these two

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid. p. 10-11.

⁸¹ Ibid. p. 10-11.

⁸² Ibid. p. 16.

incidents in 1963, in fact, was a direct contest between the two European concepts, the American Grand Design and the French European Europe.⁸³ This contest sparked a renewed effort on part of the Kennedy administration to strengthen the Atlantic framework, and Kennedy's biggest fear in the whole 1963 crisis was that France would strike a deal with the Soviet Union that would also include the Germans. The Germans were the primary objective with Kennedy's policies in the wake of the crisis, because as Lundestad argues, de Gaulle had done '*no more than could realistically have been feared from him*',⁸⁴ however the German shift towards Gaullism was the real issue. The administration therefore moved to both strengthen the Atlantic framework and contain de Gaulle. The administration succeeded in this endeavor, both the re-launch of the Multilateral Force (MLF) and substantial support for the Atlanticist Erhard were means to this end.⁸⁵

Lundestad appears to argue that since the administration managed to contain de Gaulle following the 1963 crisis, de Gaulle never really shocked the administration again. Indeed, the 1966 withdrawal from NATO's integrated command did not come as a surprise, and Johnson chose a 'soft' response; '*there was to be no ganging up against de Gaulle*' because, according to Lundestad, the Vietnam war demanded the Johnson administration's full attention.⁸⁶ This latter reasoning goes explicitly against the 'Beyond Vietnam' literature. However, the administration did worry for a while about the Germans, and the MLF was trotted out again to contain the Germans, even though Lundestad recognizes that the MLF concept unofficially had been dropped already in 1964.

Lundestad's characterization of the 1966 crisis, as a more or less non-crisis, is followed with a shift in narrative from the US or other Western European states being the actants, to NATO suddenly emerging as such. Lundestad argues that 'somewhat surprisingly' the French withdrawal made the cooperation between the remaining 14 members easier, which resulted in NATO establishing the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG), the streamlining of 'NATO machinery', and adopting the Harmel report.⁸⁷ This line of thinking also somewhat contradicts the rehabilitative Johnson literature. However, Lundestad considers the Harmel report a victory for the US '*to a large extent at the expense of France*'.⁸⁸ Indeed, the Harmel report ratified the process detente, strengthened NATO, and renewed American leadership, according to Lundestad, and perhaps he

⁸³ Ibid. p. 121-123.

⁸⁴ Ibid. p. 124.

⁸⁵ Ibid. p. 126-127.

⁸⁶ Ibid. p. 129.

⁸⁷ Ibid. p. 130.

⁸⁸ Ibid. p. 131. Lundestad's account of the entire Harmel Exercise is very much in line with Haftendorn (1996).

considers this a re-invitation of the US? In the end, Lundestad concludes that *'it was remarkable that de Gaulle gained as little support as he did. True, even the countries that remained loyal to the United States soon charted a more independent course, including West Germany; yet in the face of the strong challenge from de Gaulle, all other NATO allies were determined to show that they stood together under America's leadership.'*⁸⁹

In other words, de Gaulle and Gaullism had very little impact on the transatlantic relation except for drawing the Atlantic closer together. Lundestad lastly argues that Brezhnev limited de Gaulle's impact among NATO members. De Gaulle's overtures to the Soviet leader to overcome the 'bloc to bloc' approach was rejected by the Soviet leaders, indeed, the Kremlin saw no reason to limit its position in Eastern Europe, which the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia was a token of.⁹⁰

Much in line with Lundestad, Hanhimäki, Schoenborn, and Zancheta argue in their monograph *Transatlantic Relations since 1945 an Introduction* (2012) that the *real* crisis (French initiated) indeed was the early 1963 crisis. The point of departure for Hanhimäki et al. is that in the last 60 years or so Europe and North America have experienced a 'Pax Transatlantica', the transatlantic relation has blossomed and endured. However this piece of realia corresponds poorly with the literature on the transatlantic relation, indeed, in the literature it looks as if the transatlantic relation, according to the authors, was and is an 'endless series' of crisis and conflict. The overall question the authors pose is therefore: *'which has been the more 'normal' (or commonplace) state of transatlantic relations since 1945 – tension or unity, conflict or community?'*⁹¹

Hanhimäki et al. argue that the Second World War turned the US into a European power and it weakened the Europeans, and that would have significant impact on the transatlantic relation. However, the US stayed in Europe after the war because of the 'shared belief' across the Atlantic that the war had not provided Europe with a *'long-term solution for Western Europe's security'*,⁹² and the Soviet Union quickly emerged as a threat against the Western world. Much in line with Lundestad's claim, the authors argue that the Western European governments welcomed the American aid and the security guarantee, and that the Second World War was the watershed on the evolution of the transatlantic relation. Indeed, given Europe's devastation and the emerging Soviet threat the US *'exercised a particularly preponderant influence'*⁹³ in the reconstruction and reshaping of post-war Europe. Furthermore, the authors subscribe to Lundestad's overall estimate, that whereas the first half of the Cold War

⁸⁹ Lundestad (2003), p. 113.

⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 131-132.

⁹¹ Hanhimäki, et al. (2012), p. 1.

⁹² Ibid. Introduction.

⁹³ Ibid. p. 2.

the transatlantic relation was dominated by the US, the second half was full of Western European challenges to the American 'predominance'.⁹⁴

The 1960s was a period of challenge according to the authors, and the dual crisis of 1961-1962, namely the Berlin Wall and the Cuban missile crisis was the point of departure. Whereas the first crisis led to a more 'independent attitude' among the Germans, the Missile crisis led the European allies to question whether the Americans and the Western Europeans in fact shared the same strategic goals. In the end both crises were solved by super power agreements, which '*set the stage for a more challenging attitude*' by the Western Europeans. The Berlin crisis, in fact, sparked the subsequent *Ostpolitik* as West Berlin's mayor Willy Brandt realized that although Kennedys' famous speech in June, 1963, was an unconditional security guarantee, the American's could not remove the wall. Instead Brandt conceived the idea that '*West Germans had to develop their own political concepts and contacts with the East, if necessary without US support*'.⁹⁵ The Cuban Missile Crisis in October, 1962, and the bilateral handling of it made the Western Europeans realize that they had no impact or influence on questions of war and peace in Washington. Moreover, according to the authors, the Western European leaders realized in the wake of the Missile Crisis, that the Americans considered missiles within the Western hemisphere '*casus belli, while it [the US] routinely consented to huge numbers of Soviet missiles on the borders of Western Europe. American vulnerability was unacceptable, but threats against Europe habitual*'.⁹⁶ Despite these rather dramatic realizations, the authors argue that most Western Europeans went back to NATO as the sole provider of security, mostly because there were no real alternative.

Except for de Gaulle. Much in line with Lundestad, the authors identify the French veto of British membership of the EEC (1963) and the Elysee Treaty (1963) as the cause of the crisis, the latter throwing the Kennedy administration into a state of 'shock'.⁹⁷ They also claim that the 1963 crisis, in fact, was the 'showdown' between the US and France over their influence on Germany and it was 'decisive', because for de Gaulle to succeed with his European scheme, a strong Franco-German relation was necessary, but after Adenauer left office in October, 1963, there was never really any question about the Atlanticist orientation of the subsequent Western German governments.⁹⁸ In this light, de Gaulle's withdrawal of France from the Integrated Command in March, 1966, did not amount to a real crisis. Hanhimäki et al. argue that the French withdrawal did not come as a surprise to the administration, although

⁹⁴ Ibid. Introduction.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 66-68.

⁹⁶ Ibid. p. 68.

⁹⁷ Ibid. p. 68-70.

⁹⁸ Ibid. p. 71.

some US policy makers ‘dreaded’ the breakdown of NATO and feared a nationalist resurgence. Much in line with the rehabilitative literature Johnson is ascribed a certain foreign policy capability when the authors state: ‘*Wisely he refrained from a reaction that would further divide Europeans and explicitly kept the door open for a French return to NATO’s command structure in the future*’.⁹⁹ Furthermore, they continue arguing that de Gaulle’s withdrawal paved the way for the adoption of flexible response and the Harmel report.

In their conclusion on the Gaullist challenge, the authors state that the challenge during the 1960s, in fact, was a challenge within limits, because de Gaulle never ‘*questioned the basic usefulness of the Atlantic Alliance as long as the totalitarian system in the Soviet union persisted*’¹⁰⁰ – thus, the authors appears to overlook, that exactly during the 1960s, before the Soviet clamp down on Czechoslovakia in August, 1968, the Western Europeans considered the Soviet threat greatly diminished, and some even argued the Cold War was over. Furthermore, they conclude that the US ‘*effectively countered the Gaullist challenge, with a sharp reaction in 1963 and a forbearing attitude thereafter*’.¹⁰¹ The literature on the transatlantic relation in the 1960s exclusively concentrate on de Gaulle’s challenge, perhaps as a consequence thereof the scholars at the same time paint a picture of a rather Atlanticist Western Europe. Apparently, according to these two books the rest of the allies never really challenged American leadership in the 1960s, although Hanhimäki et al., recognize that one reason for Western Europe’s apparent refusal of Gaullism was due to French weakness and inability to keep the Germans down,¹⁰² thus implying there were some Western European alignment with de Gaulle.

Brief conclusion

If the literature on the 1960s’ transatlantic relation is combined a rather murky picture emerges. However, across fields of study, scholars agree that in the 1960s the tides were changing mostly because Western Europe had recovered from the post-war condition. The disagreements emerges on how well the Johnson administration handled this, and how big a role the other (than France) Western European states had in this change.

⁹⁹ Ibid. p. 73.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. p. 74.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. p. 74-75.

¹⁰² Ibid.

Chapter 3 Western Europe, Germany, and France in the 1960s

The Setting

In the 1960s, Western Europe's foreign policy thinking evolved around two interrelated concepts namely *détente* and realignment. With the crisis year 1961-1962 Western Europe realized the extent to which their destinies were intrinsically linked to the overall state of the super power relation. Indeed, if the balance of power should break down, Europe was the theater of a nuclear war, which both super powers were able to conduct. One outcome of this realization was that Western Europe sought to overcome the Cold War in Europe and the so-called Euro-*détente* emerged. Although the European *détente* movement was reciprocal a policy of reaching out to the 'other half' of Europe was easier conducted in Western than Eastern Europe. The Western European *détente* had many forms from de Gaulle's Eastern policy and the German *Ostpolitik*'s bilateral approach to the British calls for a multilateral outreach as the Harmel exercise was a token of.¹⁰³

Another outcome of the dual crisis was the realization that Western Europe's reduced status in global affairs could be countered by successful European integration, which promised to rehabilitate Western Europe vis-à-vis the super powers. The formative phase of European integration would however reach a state of crisis during the 1960s beginning in 1963. This was perhaps not surprisingly as fundamental Community issues such as what policy areas should integration focus on and the institutional construction of the Community was still undecided upon. In fact, there was still room to maneuver the Community into a completely federated Western Europe in the early 1960s.¹⁰⁴

The crisis year also sparked another movement in Western Europe, namely a movement of realigning Western Europe vis-à-vis America. There were different national motivations for the different Western Europe states' wishes for realigning the status quo in the transatlantic relation however, the core of this movement was the realization that as Western Europe had recovered from the war, both politically and economically, Western Europe's position in the Atlantic alliance and the Atlantic partnership did not correspond to this recovery. The lack of 'real' partnership and political influence on alliance matters, especially nuclear decision making, was tokens thereof, as well as the realization that the partnership with the US did not deliver the necessary effort to

¹⁰³ For more on the European *détente* movement and the twin crises see Leffler & Westad (2010); Bange & Niedhart (2008); Villaume & Westad (2010); Ludlow (2006).

¹⁰⁴ Ludlow (2006), pp. 3-5.

secure and obtain the objectives different Western European states' national interests called for. The German unification quest was one such example.¹⁰⁵ The realignment was closely associated with a 'lesson' of the crisis year. As Hanhimäki et al. argue it 'dawned' on the European allies that *'the United States considered nuclear missiles on Cuba a casus belli, while it routinely consented to huge numbers of Soviet missiles on the borders of Western Europe. An American vulnerability was unacceptable, but threats against Europe were habitual'*.¹⁰⁶ Although Hanhimäki et al. argues that the shock of this lesson quickly passed as the European allies realized that the alliance with the US was the only available option for protection against the Soviet menace, a certain drive for reassertion of Western Europe vis-à-vis the US in general and in the alliance was as 1960s progressed on the agenda in other Western European states than just de Gaulle's France.¹⁰⁷

Despite these political developments in Western Europe, the Western European governments did not question the necessity of an Atlantic alliance and partnership, only the *modus operandi* of it, and although the Test Ban Treaty of 1963 to a large extent diminished the fear of nuclear war in Western Europe's governments,¹⁰⁸ the impact of the crises in 1961 and 1962 was already in motion.

Although the European allies to a large extent shared Washington's perception of the Soviet Union and Soviet communism during the 1950s and in the beginning of the 1960s, the colonial powers in Western Europe was in the 1950s and early 1960s strategically and financially preoccupied with their respective colonies and the different struggles they had with demands for independence..¹⁰⁹ Thus, Western Europe had broad political and strategic interests, which extended beyond the Soviet Union and the struggle against communism to encompass geographically the entire globe, and politically specific national interest.

In the 1950s Western Europe continued the Post-war economic boom. The reason for the economic boom was among other things the ever increasing overseas trade, and in the 1950s Germany benefitted comparatively most from this trade. This improved financial situation in most Western European states was the point of departure for the establishment of the welfare state in Western Europe. The Western European social democracies would flourish in the 1960s, and in the general Western Europe's right wing parties came to accept the more egalitarian approach to society.¹¹⁰ This economic recovery also

¹⁰⁵ Urwin (1997), pp. 160-61.

¹⁰⁶ Hanhimäki et al. (2011), p. 68.

¹⁰⁷ Urwin (1997), p. 160-62.

¹⁰⁸ Judt (2005), p. 255-256.

¹⁰⁹ Judt (2005), p. 280-81, Bozo in Leffler & Westad eds. (2010), p. 165.

¹¹⁰ Urwin (1997), p. 125-28.

contributed to the general reckoning of Western Europe vis-à-vis the US.

France

As de Gaulle (1958-1969) assumed power in France in 1958 and founded the Fifth Republic a process of reasserting France in the world began. In general, de Gaulle is a prime example of the dual process of détente and realignment in Western Europe. Although de Gaulle was the most prominent and 'outspoken' leader of France during the Cold War, de Gaulle's ideas about overcoming the Cold War by the emergence of a more independent Europe, and the notion that it was necessary to maintain contacts with the Soviet Union for reasons of security, which to a large extent constituted Gaullist foreign policy, were not completely foreign in French foreign policy thinking. In the 1950s especially Jean Monnet was the foremost proponent of an independent Europe.¹¹¹

De Gaulle was determined to reassert France and overcome the 'serial humiliation' of the 20th century, and Judt argues, post-War France was lesser humiliated by the Germans than by the Anglo-American allies, and between the two, de Gaulle was particularly reluctant towards Washington for reasons of national pride and humiliation that traced back to France's colonial war in Indochina.¹¹² The French was, like most other Western European colonial powers, faced with stirrings in their respective colonies in 1950s. In Indochina France faced guerilla warfare, with the first Indochina War 1946-1954, and Ho Chi Min's guerilla forces were a serious challenge to the French forces. America stepped in with loans and aid to France, which contributed to make the French economy able to bear the war expenditures, and with the outbreak of war in Korea (1950-1954), the US increased the assistance to France, which in turn agreed to let Germany become member of NATO. In the end, the US withdrew its support to the French war effort in Indochina, which did result more or less directly to the French loss of the colony and loss of prestige in the international society.

The apparent American meddling in the strictly European affair in Suez in 1956 was another reason for French and in particular de Gaulle's ambivalence towards the US, indeed it demonstrated to France that the alliance with America inhibited, to some extent at least, the French freedom of action in foreign policy, including the policies towards the colonial empire.¹¹³ It was against this background de Gaulle formulated his anti-American foreign policy.

The assumption that Great Britain would continue to strive for the special relationship with the US was inherent in de Gaulle's perception

¹¹¹ Bozo in Leffler & Westad eds. (2010), p. 162-163.

¹¹² Judt (2005), p. 291.

¹¹³ Judt (2005), p. 291; Bozo in Leffler & Westad (2010), p. 164.

of the world order moreover, de Gaulle believed that Britain would opt for the Atlantic bond if forced to choose between Western Europe and the US. In 1962 de Gaulle was confirmed in his assumption that France and indeed Western Europe was locked in an Anglo-American grip. The British led by the conservative Prime Minister Macmillan made a deal with the Kennedy administration at Nassau to, in effect, subordinate the national British nuclear deterrent to US control by accepting an arrangement, with which the US would provide the British with Polaris sub-marine missiles in return for pooling British nuclear weapons.¹¹⁴ De Gaulle's perception of the Anglo-American partnership was reinforced when the Kennedy administration offered the French the same deal as the British without inviting de Gaulle to negotiate the terms. De Gaulle rejected this *fait accompli*.

The apparent strong Anglo-American alliance, and de Gaulle's emerging anti-Americanism was one reason why de Gaulle in January 1963 at a press conference announced the French veto against British entry into the EEC, and at the same time opted for the European solution to this apparent Anglo-American preponderance, which stood in the way for the anticipated French reassertion. The subsequent treaty of friendship between France and Germany, the so-called Elysee Treaty (1963), which among other things promised coordination of foreign policy between France and West Germany, marked this clear and decisive turn of France towards Europe against the Anglo-American preponderance.¹¹⁵ Although de Gaulle with the Elysee Treaty signaled certain friendliness towards West Germany, Germany remained a problem in French political thinking de Gaulle successively sought to contain West Germany. One means to contain Germany was a *détente* with the Soviet Union, de Gaulle shared an interest with Khrushchev (1953-1964) and Brezhnev (1964-1982) in containing German 'militarism'. De Gaulle also had a clear cut opinion on the German border issue, which was in contrast with both the Adenauer and Erhard administrations, as he believed West Germany should accept the Potsdam agreement, and therefore the Oder-Neisse border.

Cold War Revisionism

One means for de Gaulle to reestablish France as a power in the international system was to increase France's power both economically and militarily, and the ambition to reassert France in the world was also connected with, indeed inseparable from, de Gaulle's quest to transform the Cold War order, and thereby resurrect France.¹¹⁶ France's economic

¹¹⁴ Judt (2005), p. 290-92.

¹¹⁵ Judt (2005), p. 292; Soutou in Ludlow ed. (2007).

¹¹⁶ Bozo in Leffler & Westad (2010), p. 164.

growth in the early 1960s, the end of France's last colonial war in Algeria in 1962, and the establishment of a national, nuclear deterrent the so-called *Force de Frappe* in 1964 was the basis for de Gaulle's challenge of the Cold War order.

De Gaulle's vision for the end of the Cold War, the so-called Cold War revisionism, aimed at transcending the bloc system. De Gaulle believed in transcendence, and he argued that Soviet communism would not persist eternally, and that the Eastern European states inevitably would free them from the Soviet grip. He also believed that the US would not persist as a European power, because as the threat from Soviet communism would cease as de Gaulle, in fact, came to believe in the mid-1960s, the American presence in Europe would be obsolete. Thus, de Gaulle claimed that sooner or later the bloc to bloc system would end its existence, and thereby could and would a French lead Europe 'from the Atlantic to the Urals' emerge.¹¹⁷

During the first four years (1958-1962) of de Gaulle's presidency, the French president mostly focused on reasserting France in the Western bloc, thus reflecting exactly how dissatisfied de Gaulle was with the existing Atlantic order. In 1958 de Gaulle proposed a three power directorate within NATO consisting of France, Great Britain and the US, a directorate which would function as a coordinating and decision-making body of the Western world's foreign policies. De Gaulle was motivated primarily by the fact that France had little influence on the nuclear decision-making in the alliance, while at the same time the French membership of the alliance was associated with a lot of risks, including being destroyed in a nuclear war. Thus, by proposing a directorate, France would gain influence on decisions that pertained to France and French security in the nuclear age, in addition to establishing France on equal footing in the international society and in the Western alliance with the US and UK. As the incoming Kennedy administration and the British Macmillan government dismissed the French proposal, de Gaulle instead moved to strengthen the Franco-German cooperation and strengthen European integration with the Fouchet plan of 1961-1962. The Fouchet plan envisioned building the EEC into a 'union of states'¹¹⁸ which was quite independent from the US. This plan also faltered, however, it reflected upon de Gaulle's drive for reform of the transatlantic relation.

In the wake of the dual crisis in 1961-1962 de Gaulle launched his policy towards the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in 1964. This shift in French foreign policy was not, however, an expression of a Gaullist retreat from reasserting France in the Western alliance, but a reflection

¹¹⁷ Bozo in Leffler & Westad (2010), p. 164; Costigliola (1992), p. 119.

¹¹⁸ Quoted from Bozo in Leffler & Westad (2010), p. 166.

upon the changing circumstances in Europe and a changing French perception of the Soviet Union's intentions.

Indeed, the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962, had facilitated a super power rapprochement according to de Gaulle, and this rapprochement would only strengthen the super power dominion in Europe, which the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 was a token of. De Gaulle furthermore believed that the Brezhnev leadership (1964-1982) and the emerging Sino-Soviet rift would demand a far more pacific Soviet approach to the West.¹¹⁹ Indeed, de Gaulle appeared to have reassessed his initial suspicions about Khrushchev's peaceful co-existence concept. Moreover, de Gaulle's initial assumption about Eastern European desires for independence from the Kremlin appeared to be materializing, at least on the horizon in the wake of the Missile Crisis. The Franco-German rapprochement signified by the Elysee Treaty also suffered a severe blow, which further moved de Gaulle towards the East. In May, 1963, American pressure upon the new West German leadership under Ludwig Erhard (CDU), resulted in a preamble to the Elysee Treaty declaring German loyalty to the US and NATO.¹²⁰ De Gaulle also considered the US proposal to set up the American lead and controlled multilateral nuclear force (MLF) within NATO as another evidence of an American policy of both the rapprochement with the Soviet Union and a simultaneous maintenance of American hegemony in the Western alliance. De Gaulle believed he could counter this by reaching out to Eastern Europe.¹²¹

De Gaulle's Eastern policy was however, more than just a policy that aimed at countering American hegemony and reasserting France. After 1964 de Gaulle presented an alternative to the existing bloc-to-bloc system in Europe and a recipe to overcome the Cold War. According to de Gaulle a transformation of the Soviet Union into a cooperative power, the gradual emancipation of Eastern Europe, the emergence of Western Europe as an independent power would create a dialectical process, which in the end would transform the bloc-to-bloc system.¹²² De Gaulle presented his scheme for overcoming the Cold War at a press conference in February, 1965, but neither the Soviet Union nor the US was taken by de Gaulle's scheme.

Throughout the latter half of the 1960s de Gaulle continued his Eastern policy and the policy of reasserting France in the alliance. These two correlated in March, 1966, when de Gaulle withdrew France from NATO's integrated command. Indeed, as the threat from the Soviet Union diminished, there was a need to transform NATO into a less

¹¹⁹ Bozo in Leffler & Westad (2010), p. 168pp.

¹²⁰ Lundestad (2003), pp. 121-124.

¹²¹ Bozo in Leffler & Westad (2010), p. 170.

¹²² Bozo in Leffler & Westad (2010), p. 170.

bellicose and American dominated alliance. In fact, Paris came to believe that the French withdrawal from the strains in the Western bloc would inspire the Eastern European states to break free from Soviet dominion.¹²³ The French withdrawal from the integrated command in 1966 did have an impact on the alliance, as will be discussed in detail in Chapters 5 and 6, however not as de Gaulle had hoped for. The Soviet clamp down in Prague in October 1968 proved, to some at least, that the Gaullist concept was flawed. The 1968 student revolt in Paris and the Soviet clamp down on Czechoslovakia brought de Gaulle to his fall.

West Germany

The overall trend in German politics in the 1960s was that the direction (either Atlantic or European) of foreign policy and the reunification question brought governments down. In West Germany the rise of social democratism was evident and the eventual success of *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (SPD) was indeed, based on a decisive new approach to foreign policy in general, and the reunification question in particular. The erection of the Berlin Wall in August 1961, had created a new status quo in Europe and West Germany, which also fed the increasingly more prevalent critique of the West German post-War policy on these matters of foreign policy and reunification.

The Setting

In 1957 the Christian-conservative *Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands* (CDU) led by Konrad Adenauer won the absolute majority in West Germany. The CDU had benefitted from the economic boom in 1950s, which in a German context was largely ascribed to the genius of CDU's Finance Minister and the later Chancellor Ludwig Erhard. The CDU enjoyed not least because of the economic miracle immense popular support, and CDU's concept on German unification benefitted equally from this popular support.¹²⁴ West German foreign policy was largely bound up with the unification question, to which the Hallstein Doctrine served. The Hallstein Doctrine of 1955 stipulated that West Germany denied diplomatic relations with any state, which recognized East Germany except from the Soviet Union, and the doctrine incorporated non-recognition of the Oder-Neisse border. Indeed, West Germany had no diplomatic relations with any Eastern European states as a function of the Hallstein Doctrine. Some scholars argue that the doctrine, in fact, facilitated the later rapprochement with the Eastern

¹²³ Bozo in Leffler & Westad (2010), p. 170.

¹²⁴ Urwin (1997), p.137.

bloc, which the Kiesinger administration began in 1966 and which flourished with the Brandt administration's *Ostpolitik* in 1969.

While the Hallstein Doctrine tied West Germany to the West and signaled to the Eastern bloc a clear Atlanticist adherence, the CDU pursued a policy of *Westbindung*, which aimed at rehabilitating West Germany in the West. Adenauer and the CDU reasoned that by binding West Germany into the West through its political institutions, most notably the European integration scheme, West Germany would be politically rehabilitated, and given sovereignty and political influence in the West.

The so-called client-state relation West Germany had with the US would become increasingly strained as West Germany was, as a result of the policy of *Westbindung*, politically rehabilitated in the 1960s. In general, CDU's Atlanticist orientation mainly served the purpose of rehabilitating West Germany politically.¹²⁵

The policy of *Westbindung* made West Germany, and the CDU, among the foremost proponents of European integration,¹²⁶ and *Westbindung* was also one reason for Adenauer's rapprochement with France, which was crowned with the Elysee Treaty of January 1963, however the treaty also revealed a not entirely convinced Atlanticist CDU leadership. Indeed, Granieri speaks of CDU's ambivalent alliance with the US,¹²⁷ and Adenauer would after he resigned as head of the CDU in 1963 become even more Gaullist. Although the Bundestag was forced to commit to a preamble to the Elysee Treaty stating German Atlantic adherence by the US, the Franco-German rapprochement was a reality by the early 1960s. Despite Adenauer and with him a group of Gaullists did not fully share de Gaulle's visions of a Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, Adenauer saw a strong Franco-German relation as the central part of the EEC, the very same structure that would rehabilitate the Federal Republic. The German adherence to the European integration was also a means for Adenauer to accommodate French security interests.¹²⁸

Arguably the Hallstein Doctrine was the only viable position on the reunification question at the time and it made an actual reunification more remote, SPD's alternative approach in the early 1960s was to seek reunification on the basis of neutrality. Adenauer withdrew as Chancellor in 1963 and left CDU without a strong leadership. Erhard took over, and the Erhard government (1963-1966) parted on a number of questions including whether West Germany should prioritize the Atlantic relations higher than the relation with France, and the question about

¹²⁵ Urwin (1997), p.135-38.

¹²⁶ Granieri (2009), p. 6.

¹²⁷ Granieri (

¹²⁸ Kettenacker (1997), p. 54.

reunification and Berlin. The struggle in the party between the Gaullists and Atlanticists would in the end bring Erhard down.

The SPD

In the 1960s social democrats throughout Western Europe were rising to prominence. In West Germany SPD paved the way for the rise to a potential coalition partner at the Bad Godesberg Convention in 1959, at which the party denounced Marxist economic models and adhered to social market economy, and abandoned their opposition to NATO.¹²⁹ With this move, the CDU was deprived of its position as the primary opponent of Marxist ideology.

Willy Brandt took over leadership of the SPD in 1964, and his and his close advisor Egon Bahr's leadership of an Atlanticist SPD signified the beginning of a movement away from the Hallstein Doctrine, a movement which had been under way since the construction of the Berlin Wall. Whereas the Adenauer administration had seen the Wall as a confirmation of the Hallstein Doctrine's prudence, Brandt and Bahr thought otherwise.¹³⁰ The new leadership also signified the beginning of a movement away from the client state relationship with the US.

To begin with Brandt and Bahr created the *Politik der Kleinen Schritten* to make the wall somewhat more permeable, and thereby relieve West Berliners' access to families and friends on the other side. The policy of small steps was, despite the 'small' scale character, a clear breach with the Hallstein Doctrine's ban against recognizing East Germany. Indeed, the matter of Christmas Passes established a precedence for a far more pragmatic and flexible approach to East Germany.¹³¹ Brandt and Bahr continued introducing new political thinking in the first half of the 1960s, Brandt mostly in international settings, and by 1963 the new approach to reunification the concept of *Wandel durch Annäherung* was introduced. With the approach Brandt stressed the adherence to *Westbindung* and argued that German unification would only be possible if Germany continued being tied into the West, however, a reunification would also only be possible if changes in the East was set in motion, and from the point of departure of a recognition of the status quo including a recognition of East Germany.¹³² Reconciliation with the East was as important as the reconciliation with the West, and Brandt and Bahr was along with de Gaulle among the first proponents of a détente with the East. Brandt and Bahr in effect argued for both NATO and an opening

¹²⁹ Garnieri (2009), p. 13; Fullbrook (2009) p. 167.

¹³⁰ Kleuters (2012), p. 112.

¹³¹ Kleuters (2012), p. 136; Bark & Gress (1989), p. 15.

¹³² Kleuters (2012), p. 112-114; Brak & Gress (1989), p. 95.

to the East, a foreign policy dualism, which Gress and Bark claim was inherent in SPD's thinking before the Harmel study formalized it.¹³³

However, not only SPD but also the West German public, elite, and industry argued for an opening of relations with Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe had traditionally been the primary buyers of German industrial production. The Hallstein doctrine was increasingly seen as an obstacle rather than a viable strategy towards reunification.¹³⁴

The Erhard Administration (1963-1966)

The Erhard administration's foreign policy was in the words of Gress and Bark 'Janus-faced',¹³⁵ indeed the struggle over the direction of West German foreign policy came to fore in the CDU.

The Erhard government attempted a middle way on the German question with the so-called policy of movement, reflecting both the strains in CDU and that CDU's foreign policy thinking, especially towards the German question, was at a watershed. The policy of movement aimed at opening for cultural and economic exchange with Eastern Europe without establishing diplomatic relations; while at the same time uphold the non-recognition and isolation of East Germany.¹³⁶ The policy of movement was led by foreign minister Schroeder, who along with Erhard was a declared Atlanticist. They both believed that German foreign policy must aim at alignment with the US and European integration, while at the same time balancing the French. The Atlanticists was adamantly opposed to de Gaulle's scheme for Europe, and supported the British entry into the EEC. However, the Atlanticists were also keenly aware of the need to continue the rapprochement and reconciliation with France.¹³⁷

As Adenauer left the seat as head of the CDU to Erhard in 1962, the conflict between the Atlanticist and the Gaullists within the CDU came to the fore. In the end, this conflict of orientation in foreign policy undermined the Erhard leadership and was a significant reason for the fall of Erhard in 1966, despite the CDU had 'stunning electoral landslide victory' at the elections in 1965, indeed, the conflict played into the hands of SPD, which consistently showed Atlanticist adherence.¹³⁸

Although the Gaullists such as Guttenberg, Strauss, and Adenauer within the CDU/CSU clearly sided with de Gaulle in his opposition to Americanization and to Anglo-Saxon dominance of Europe, the German

¹³³ Bark & Gress (1989), pp. 20-21.

¹³⁴ Garnieri (2009); Kleuters (2012), p. 141.

¹³⁵ Bark & Gress (1989) 14.

¹³⁶ Urwin (1997), p. 158.

¹³⁷ Bark & Gress (1989) p. 14.

¹³⁸ Garnieri (2009), p. 19.

Gaullists, in fact, feared a certain Gaullist backlash in West Germany. The Gaullists worried that CDU/CSU would become associated with de Gaulle's domestic and constitutional ideas, which they indeed did not share. Thus, the German Gaullists were *selective* Gaullists in that they exclusively shared a certain opposition to American dominance in Western Europe and preferred a 'Europe of Fatherlands' instead, the Gaullists within the CDU/CSU adhered strictly to a supranational Europe, which in the end collided with de Gaulle's concept especially after the Empty Chair Crisis in 1966. By the late 1960s the German-Franco Gaullist relation was strained because of the divergence of opinion on European integration, but also because of the apparent lack of Christianity in French Gaullist thinking, after all the CDU was a Christian-conservative party.¹³⁹

The conflict between the Gaullists and Atlanticists in German politics should however, not be seen as a conflict between adherence to either Paris or Washington, the struggle should be seen as a continuum, because it essentially was a struggle of opinion on *the extent* to which West Germany should adhere to either Paris or Washington. By the time Erhard took over as Chancellor in 1963 West Germany was a part of the Western world, and the division of Europe and Germany was a fact of life, therefore the real question was, seen from Bonn at least, what kind of Western organization served West German interests best? Both fractions agreed on *Westbindung*, European integration, and the necessity of the alliance with the US.

The Gaullists led by Adenauer, Strauss, and Guttenberg argued that a strong European organization served German interest best as a check on American dominance in European affairs, whereas the Atlanticist led by Erhard and Schröder tipped to a strong European organization without it being at the expense of the close alliance with the US.¹⁴⁰ This division took on different forms depending on the issue, however, the Gaullists were in general, against the American policy of détente (the petite détente) or any policy the US followed, that involved an American impact on the organization of Europe, a US policy which they contracted was about recognizing the status quo in Europe, and creating a super power condominium at the expense of West German interests. The German Gaullists were for that matter also weary of the Soviet Union, and suspected the other super power had similar intentions as the US. The Atlanticists were far more accommodating towards the US and US policies mostly as a result of a reluctance to jeopardize a close relation with the US, which they believed were essential to German interests.

¹³⁹ Granieri (2009), p. 20.

¹⁴⁰ For more on Gaullism vs. Atlanticism see Granieri (2003).

By the summer of 1964 a principal decision of making Germany America's strongest ally in Europe was taken in Bonn directly opposing the Gaullist position. Indeed, de Gaulle was complaining that the Erhard administration did not fulfill the pledge of the Elysee Treaty to coordinate French and German foreign policy, and de Gaulle argued that if Erhard was not willing to pursue a common policy, especially as the US was on the verge of overextension in Vietnam, France would seek and explore an independent French European policy, which would involve agreement with the Soviet Union on European security that did not necessarily accommodate German interest including reunification. This led Erhard to conclude that Germany must follow the US. The Erhard administration reasoned that by making Germany the most committed ally in Europe, Bonn would give the Johnson administration 'justifiable' reasons for staying in Europe despite the assumed overextension. To the contrary the Gaullists argued that the Vietnam War exactly was the reason why the Johnson administration would seek 'easy' agreements with the Soviet Union at the expense of German interests, and therefore, to counter this trend, Germany should move closer to France.

This choice of becoming America's strongest ally in Europe proved to be decisive for West Germany's position on several issues including Vietnam and the MLF.¹⁴¹ The Gaullists were against the MLF, and instead argued for an independent European nuclear force. This would make Europe an independent power in the world; although they contemplated it should be in close alliance with the US.¹⁴² But more importantly, by making Germany the strongest ally of the US in Europe, Germany's foreign policy was also subjected to the shifts and turns in US policy.¹⁴³

The policy of movement sought to strike a balance between the two fractions on the most central issue in German foreign policy, namely reunification. On one hand Erhard and Schroeder opened up to the Eastern Europe, and on the other hand the Gaullists were granted the continuance of the Hallstein Doctrine whereby German interests of not conceding anything to the Soviet Union and East Germany was protected. However, the Hallstein Doctrine was under severe pressure as the 1960s progressed. Nasser had recognized the East German regime without Bonn breaking of diplomatic ties with Egypt, in effect reflecting that Bonn (at least the Atlanticist fraction) did not want to break off diplomatic relations with states that recognized East Germany if it was against West German interests. Egypt had recognized East Germany and accepted bilateral aid program however, Bonn wanted to stay close to the

¹⁴¹ Bark & Gress (1989), p. 23.

¹⁴² Quoted from Granieri (2003), p. 198.

¹⁴³ Bark & Gress (1989), p. 55.

Arab countries especially as the weapons sales to Israel had become public. Moreover, the crisis in the Middle East, which emerged as a consequence of the weapons sales to Israel, also led to a recognition in Bonn, that German interests, in fact, was the Federal Republics interest and therefore, the Federal Republic should act as a state in its own right based on its own interest and not as a part of a bigger whole.¹⁴⁴

The election in September 1965 only intensified the conflict between the Gaullists and Atlanticist in CDU; indeed, the Gaullists pursued an anti-American and anti-Schroeder campaign throughout the election period,¹⁴⁵ which was in part motivated by the internal CDU struggle for the chair of the party, and in part by Adenauer's contempt and distrust of Erhard and the Atlanticist leadership.¹⁴⁶ The Atlanticists won a convincing victory, and German foreign policy was manifested as essentially Atlanticist, and the CDU/CSU and FDP coalition continued under Erhard's leadership. However, despite this victory the Gaullists initiated a campaign against foreign minister Schroeder, and despite an increasingly more assertive France vis-à-vis West Germany, the German Gaullists continued to campaign against the Atlanticist foreign policy even after this Atlanticist 1965 landslide victory.¹⁴⁷

The foreign policy after the 1965 election was still inhibited by the Hallstein Doctrine. On one hand, the Erhard leadership was committed to détente with Eastern Europe, but on the other hand, the doctrine inhibited a genuine commitment to the very détente. The Erhard administration issued the so-called Peace Note on March, 1966 to the governments of Europe and the superpowers to overcome this apparent deadlock in German foreign policy. The note contained a declaration of policy but also reflected the strains the Hallstein Doctrine put on German foreign policy. The Note was also dispatched to overcome the American pressure on the administration to sign the nonproliferation treaty – when the US and the USSR had come to an agreement on the matter.

On the question of nuclear weapons, the Erhard administration, Gaullists and Atlanticists alike, feared that by renouncing German rights to develop a national nuclear deterrent, West Germany would find itself in an isolated position on the European continent flanked by the nuclear powers; France, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. The Erhard administration therefore proposed with the Note a series of non-aggression treaties with the Soviet Union and Eastern European states, which would also limit and reduce the number of nuclear weapons in Europe. Although the effort produced no results, it signaled a German

¹⁴⁴ Bark & Gress (1989), p. 27-28.

¹⁴⁵ Granieri (2003), p. 205-06.

¹⁴⁶ Bark & Gress (1989), p. 37.

¹⁴⁷ Granieri (2003), p. 210-11.

frustration with the strains of the Hallstein doctrine, but also a certain reluctance to 'blindly' accommodate the Johnson administration. Indeed, by the mid-1960s a beginning of assertion of West Germany was well on its way. The Note also revealed the Soviet Union's hard bargaining position. In the reply from the Kremlin, the Soviets demanded recognition of East Germany, the Oder-Neisse line, and a complete withdrawal of West Germany from NATO, and called for a common conference on security in Europe.¹⁴⁸

The campaign against a future nonproliferation scheme was however, caught up with by the offset negotiations in the fall of 1966. The Johnson administration demanded an increased offset payment from Germany, which Erhard reluctantly agreed to. This sparked yet another Gaullist campaign against Erhard, this time claiming that the US had moved focus to their own economic problems, and therefore had lost interest in German reunification or European unification. Therefore, the Gaullists argued, Franco-German cooperation and a strong independent Europe were indeed most needed. In the end, the Gaullists in fact managed to discredit Erhard's budget of 1967 to the extent that the coalition partner FDP and the Bundestag rejected it, and Erhard withdrew from the post as Chancellor.¹⁴⁹ With the fall of Erhard the determinant struggle between Atlanticism and Gaullism in West German foreign policy faded, mostly because CDU lost its position of dominance in the new coalition of CDU and SPD.

The Grand Coalition

The new Chancellor Kurt Georg Kiesinger (CDU) formed a coalition with the SPD making Brandt Foreign Minister and Vice Chancellor. The former foreign minister Schröder took up the position as defense minister, and the Gaullist Guttenberg was appointed parliamentary state secretary on the recommendation of Adenauer.¹⁵⁰ Although the Grand Coalition has been termed 'the forgotten government', this was the first government in post-War Germany, which the SPD was member of, signifying a larger Western European trend of Social Democracies – the new left -- entering Western European governments.¹⁵¹ Moreover, Brandt laid the groundwork for the 1969 *Ostpolitik* during his years as foreign minister in the Grand Coalition.¹⁵²

The Grand Coalition's foreign policy and position on the reunification issue was a divisive matter, which in the end undermined

¹⁴⁸ Bark & Gress (1989), pp. 41-45.

¹⁴⁹ Granieri (2003), p. 219-220; Bark & Gress (1989), pp. 56-57..

¹⁵⁰ Kleuters (2012), p.132.

¹⁵¹ Fulbrook (2009), p. 170.

¹⁵² Fulbrook (2009), p. 175.

Kiesinger's leadership. Although Brandt and Bahr's rapprochement concept had the support of Kiesinger, Kiesinger maintained that East Germany should not be recognized. Although the non-recognition principle was against SPD's thinking, the Grand Coalition only signed non-aggression pacts with Eastern Europe excluding East Germany. This signified the extent to which the coalition abolished The Hallstein Doctrine's prohibition of having diplomatic relations with states that recognized East Germany, indeed the very first nonaggression pact was signed with Tito's Yugoslavia, which had been the first Eastern European state to recognize East Germany.

The SPD and CDU/CSU also departed on the question of the Oder-Neisse border. Brandt went beyond the agreed government position on the question, when he in Nuremberg in March 1968 declared readiness to accept and recognize the Oder-Neisse as the legitimate border. Although Brandt was forced to retreat from the statement, the unification question was increasingly dividing the Grand Coalition. Indeed when the Soviet Union intervened in Prague in August 1968, the difference of interpretation between Brandt and Bahr on one side and Kiesinger on the other could not have been greater. Brandt and Bahr argued that the Soviet invasion indeed highlighted the necessity of bringing the Soviet Union to the negotiating table to effectively achieve reconciliation with the East, which was central for a reunification. Kiesinger and CDU/CSU interpreted the events in Prague in completely different terms, and concluded that a policy of strength was necessary, and that the rapprochement had failed. This did not keep Brandt from initiating talks with the Soviets, to explore the possibilities for a negotiation. During these talks the Soviets put forward their wishes for a summit meeting discussing European security.¹⁵³ During the election campaign in 1969 – and even before – representatives from the CDU accused the coalition partners in the SPD for being an *anerkennungspartei* claiming this was an irresponsible position. This highlights the divergence of perception on the most central issue in post-war West German foreign policy.

While the Grand Coalition was gradually deteriorating, the liberal party the *Freie Demokratische Partei* (FDP) headed by the liberal Erich Mende, who lost to a group of left-leaning pragmatists during the 1966-1969 period of opposition gained political strength. The left-leaning group, the so-called Saxon guard, consisted of among others of Scheel, who would become party leader in 1967, and Genscher, who had opposed Erhard's 1967 budget and would become foreign minister in 1974, and gained power in the party on a new *Ostpolitik*. The group argued that recognition of East Germany and the Oder-Neisse border, in

¹⁵³ Kleuters (2012), pp. 133-138.

fact, was a reasonable price to pay for an eventual reunification. In many ways this was complete in line with the SPD's position.¹⁵⁴

By the time of the elections in 1969, the SPD in coalition with the FDP presented an entirely new approach to both the German reunification question and German foreign policy at large. The coalition negotiated draft treaties in 1970 with the Soviet Union and Poland, the latter recognizing the Oder-Neisse border, and Bonn normalized relations with Czechoslovakia in 1973. Most important, the Brandt administration initiated talks with East Germany, and in 1972 the two Germanies concluded the so-called Basic Treaty, which formalized exchange of representatives though without a full diplomatic recognition. Through this sweeping process of *Ostpolitik*, most of the opposition to SPD's *Ostpolitik* came from CDU.¹⁵⁵

European Integration

The European Community was throughout the 1960s marked by crisis and cooperation. Hardly surprising de Gaulle was at the center of conflict, along with West Germany. In 1960s West Germany had risen to leadership during EEC crises, and perhaps marked that the policy of *Westbindung* indeed was a success.

The 1963 crisis

De Gaulle's concept of Europe broke with the anticipations of the post-War concept of European integration. De Gaulle favored an organized Europe without a supranational element. Indeed, a 'Europe of States' organized through interstate cooperation, served the purpose of reestablishing France as a great power and containing Germany.¹⁵⁶ European integration was largely seen as inhibiting French freedom of action in foreign policy in essence integration inhibited the reassertion of France as a great power. The crisis the Community was brought into as a result of the French veto of British entry into the community in 1963 marked the end the period of Gaullist restraint in Paris' dealings with the European partners. In general, the French veto signaled along with the French rejection of the MLF scheme and the conclusion of the Elysee treaty the beginning of an attack on both the Atlantic partnership and European integration. The European partners saw the French dual attack on the status quo as an attempt to replace integration and cooperation with nationalism and power politics.¹⁵⁷ Indeed, de Gaulle's veto had demonstrated that de Gaulle was not willing to commit France and French foreign policy to the principles which the multilateral institution

¹⁵⁴ Bark & Gress (1989), p. 90-92.

¹⁵⁵ Urwin (1997), pp. 158-59.

¹⁵⁶ Soutou in Ludlow ed. (2007), p. 11-15.

¹⁵⁷ Ludlow (2006), pp. 12-13.

embodied. The French veto had, so to speak, appeared outside the Community's structures, as de Gaulle had announced the veto in a radiobroadcast.

The remaining five, once the shock of de Gaulle's action had settled, agreed that the only possible response was to rehabilitate the Community in fact; the best response to de Gaulle's line of thinking was a further commitment to the principles of integration and cooperation in Europe. Although there was dissent among the five as to whether the Community and the individual member states should respond to de Gaulle's action with caution or the opposite, the Community led by the Germans and Italians chose the cautious approach. This was indeed the only approach in the light of the decision to continue and rehabilitate the community. Interestingly, this pattern of cautious response to de Gaulle's divergent actions would repeat itself throughout the 1960s and not just among the community members but also across the Atlantic.

The task of rebuilding the Community after the French veto was led by the German government that was guided by the policy of *Westbindung*. West Germany had numerous interests in the rehabilitation of the Community, among the most basic the commitment to European integration along with the equally important commitment to the Atlantic partnership.¹⁵⁸ However, the motivation for FRG's drive to orchestrate the reconstruction of the community was a political choice based on the assessment of German national interest at that particular moment in time.¹⁵⁹ Moreover, the German quest to reconstruct also reflected the internal struggle within the CDU among the Gaullists and Atlanticists.¹⁶⁰ Indeed, an active German leadership of the reconstruction of the community would both justify the Elysee Treaty and rescue it at the same time. The Treaty would be justified if the Germans used the cooperative measures of the treaty, in fact German pressure through the treaty mechanisms, could induce de Gaulle to put on more cooperative manners in Paris' dealings with the five. At the same time, this active use of the treaty's cooperative measures would further the Franco-German rapprochement. Moreover, and perhaps more important, Germany would demonstrate to both sides of the Atlantic the continued adherence of Germany to European integration, despite the conclusion of the Elysee treaty. Lastly, the German leadership was driven by certain worries about the yet unfolded Common Market, the CAP, and the unequal distribution of benefits of the integration among the members, all of which could be addressed by the German leadership in this new phase. The Erhard administration also deemed it equally important to

¹⁵⁸ Urwin (1997), pp. 135-38.

¹⁵⁹ Ludlow (2006), pp. 17-18.

¹⁶⁰ More on the struggle between Gaullists and Atlanticists see below.

maintain the British interest in membership of the alliance, and the Community shared a fear that the British would drift from the continent.

The European Community survived the crisis of 1963 because the five remained as committed to the embodying principles. Indeed, in December, 1963, the Community concluded a deal on a reform of the CAP, and signaled that the EEC had overcome the crisis and returned to good multilateralist behavior with all members committing themselves to the guiding principles for the community's negotiation.¹⁶¹

Despite the crisis of 1963 was overcome, beneath the surface several problems still lurked, all of which would haunt the community throughout the 1960s. Among these were the unresolved questions about the Commission's role vis-à-vis the Council, i.e., the level of supranationalism. West Germany had in fact signaled by the 'agenda setting role' in connection with the French veto that West Germany too favored less supranationalism and more nation-state. Moreover, the British position had not been resolved either.¹⁶²

The Empty Chair Crisis

The Community succeeded with important reform in 1964 and 1965, especially the agreement on cereal prices was a token of a Community, which was fully on tracks. However, there were some cracks and important issues within the Community that had to be resolved.

Among these was UK entry into the community. Although the British Labour government was lukewarm of EEC membership, Wilson at least formally never declared a non-interest in the community after 1963. There were also a drift away from federalism, which the integration concept originally had been contemplated on. The French were not alone; indeed, the Germans and the Dutch were reluctant towards federalism as well, and by the end of 1964 a majority of the members warned against leaving the future direction of the political union in the hands of the Commission, but rather the national governments should direct the matter.¹⁶³ This did not mean however, that political coordination was not a Community objective. Germany, led by Erhard, was pushing for a political coordination in the community in the foreign policy area, arguing for a need to discuss the East-West conflict among the European partners.¹⁶⁴ By 1965 de Gaulle launched a campaign to force the European partners to commit to a 'Europe of States' that culminated in the so-called Empty Chair Crisis, which lasted for six months. France boycotted Brussels in the middle of negotiation on a reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

¹⁶¹ Ludlow (2006), pp. 18-37.

¹⁶² Ludlow (2006), pp. 38-39.

¹⁶³ Ludlow (2006), pp. 40-48.

¹⁶⁴ Ludlow (2006), p. 58.

Ludlow argues that the crisis came about as especially Germany, Italy and the Netherlands rebelled against France's relative dominance in the community matters.¹⁶⁵ France had gained this position of relative strength vis-à-vis the European partners as a result of the 'destructive potential'¹⁶⁶ France had demonstrated it had with the rejection of the European Defense Community (EDC) in 1954. The lesson drawn from this among the European partners was, according to Ludlow, twofold. On one hand, the five believed that without France there could be no integration, and on the other hand, that French support to various political schemes was not given beforehand. Accordingly the European partners sought to accommodate the French views and national interests during the negotiations on the Treaty of Rome, which indeed bore the print of French national interests.¹⁶⁷ This line of thinking was confirmed with the French unilateralism of 1963.

Despite the successes the community had had with reforming the CAP it was still an area that was highly advantageous to France. During the early 1960s a certain *modus operandi* or pattern in the EEC negotiations arose. Germany and Italy, along with the rest of the EEC partners found themselves in a situation, in which hindering a French withdrawal from the Community had a prime place in the negotiations resulting in a somewhat over-accommodating Community towards French interests, which this favorable CAP was a result of. However de Gaulle's success with this negotiating strategy caught up with France in the mid-1960s. In both Italy and Germany the relative high cost of the CAP was deemed too much, and it became government priority to reform the CAP, and coupled with a French recognition that France in fact benefitted enormously from the EEC the balance between the partners switched. The French leaving the Community was no longer a believable scenario, because France benefitted so greatly from the Community. Ludlow even argue that the occasionally but continuously outbursts from de Gaulle against the Community was nothing but empty threats.¹⁶⁸

The Empty Chair Crisis was therefore, according to Ludlow, brought on by partly a recognition in Germany and Italy that they indeed contributed more to the CAP than was reasonable, and partly that France's threats of leaving the Community, which was veiled in de Gaulle's anti-integration outbursts, in fact was an empty threat. The showdown between the partners led by West Germany was the CAP negotiations in July, 1965, in which Germany and Italy set out to reform

¹⁶⁵ Ludlow (1999), p. 233.

¹⁶⁶ Ludlow (1999), p. 234.

¹⁶⁷ Ludlow (1999), p. 234-35.

¹⁶⁸ Ludlow (1999), p. 236-39.

the CAP, and change the distribution of costs and benefits within the Community. France left the negotiations – thus the crisis emerged.

The Luxembourg compromise of January, 1966, ended the crisis and resolved the differences between the partners. De Gaulle succeeded to some extent as the compromise established the intergovernmental character of the EEC.¹⁶⁹ In addition the Empty Chair Crisis can also be seen as a crisis fed by the current state of affairs in the relations between the six and not just a crisis of constitutionalism. This apparent turn in the internal EEC balance also signified another developing trend in Western Europe during the 1960s, namely that of German -- and Italian -- political rehabilitation, which contributed to a certain isolation of France -- at least in EEC matters, as the Empty Chair Crisis was a token of. However, despite the relative isolation of France in the Community France was still a member of the EEC, and as such de Gaulle's potential and sometimes real obstructionist behavior had an impact on the Community and the development of it throughout the 1960s.

British Membership of Europe

The Wilson government once more made a bid for the continent, as Britain decided on a second application in 1967. Labour who traditionally had been against British membership of the EEC, reversed its position much of the same reasons as the Conservative MacMillan government had in 1961, namely trade. As the EEC had demonstrated its viability and increasingly organized trade, coupled with a forecast of a decreasing Commonwealth trade, the Wilson government had a very good reason for applying again. However, as with the first application de Gaulle blocked it, although this time the application was not withdrawn, and as de Gaulle left government in 1969, the path for British entry was cleared.¹⁷⁰ The Wilson government's decision to apply once again largely reflected an overall tendency in the UK's declining status as a global power.

The Wilson government (1964-1970) came to preside over a period of imperial overstretch. While the Labour government followed the Conservative MacMillan government's policy of preserving Great Britain's status as a global power, the 1960s saw the overstretch of British armed forces. The UK was committed to no less than three different alliances, namely NATO, the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO), and the Central Eastern Treaty Organization (CENTO), which taken together committed the UK globally. Moreover, by the time Wilson came into office, two wars were being fought, a confrontation in Indonesia (1960 -1966) and a fight against insurgents in

¹⁶⁹ Ludlow (1999), p. 233.

¹⁷⁰ Urwin (1997), pp. 168-69.

Aden (1957-1967) and South Arabia (1968), and at the same time the East of Suez remained a top priority in British defense thinking.¹⁷¹

Despite the fact that the USSR continued its arms buildup during the 1960s, the Labour government downscaled the threat perception. In general, the USSR was considered a moderate, and somewhat rational actor on the global stage, and in terms of the threat towards Western Europe and the UK the threat was latent, and the same which had existed ever since the late 1940s.¹⁷² In many ways, the Wilson government had the same perception of the Soviet threat as de Gaulle.

The Labour government decided early on that British nuclear weapons should be retained, although Labour traditionally was against the national nuclear deterrent, and even had pledged during the election campaign in 1964, to renegotiate the Nassau agreement and place the British nuclear deterrent under NATO control. However, the Wilson administration instead decided upon retaining the Polaris missiles in late 1965. In general, Labour saw the retaining of the nuclear missiles as a guarantee against renewed nuclear threats against East of Suez, and an American retreat into isolationism.¹⁷³ In this light, the British proposal to an ANF was probably not genuine, but rather a tactical ploy to hinder the creation of a multilateral scheme within NATO. Indeed, the British along with the French, Soviets, and Americans were adamantly opposed to the idea that West Germany would gain a finger on the nuclear trigger. Instead the British supported both a consultation arrangement in NATO on nuclear questions, which eventually would turn into the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG), and British support for the non-proliferation treaty (NPT) without a European clause.¹⁷⁴ In general, the Labour government feared like most of the other European states a resurgent Germany.

In a March, 1966, defense review announced that the British forces in the Mediterranean, Aden, and South Arabia would be withdrawn by 1968 mostly as an outcome of financial strains. Indeed, this marked shift in British defense thinking from a global commitment to a Eurocentric focus. The Sterling Crisis of 1967 put the already strained British economy into an even worse position, and sparked the beginning of a debate resulting in the withdrawal of British forces from East of the Suez.¹⁷⁵

While the economic problems caused by the global commitment, the Labour leadership was also driven by certain disillusionment with the

¹⁷¹ Hughes (2009), pp. 85-87.

¹⁷² Hughes (2009), pp. 90-93.

¹⁷³ Hughes (2009), pp.92-94.

¹⁷⁴ Hughes (2009), p. 95. The European Clause would not bar Europe from obtaining a nuclear deterrent.

¹⁷⁵ Hughes (2009), p. 106.

Commonwealth. The post-imperial world was not uncritically supportive of the former Empire, if supportive at all. Moreover, the 'special relationship' had turned sour, as the Johnson administration had largely overlooked the British in both NPT negotiations and more importantly, overlooked the by treaty pledged British influence in South East Asian matters. By joining the EEC the British would avoid being isolated in global politics, and instead have a platform (the EEC) from which British influence could be extended. The EEC was also a protective means against too much influence and pressure from the US on British foreign policy.¹⁷⁶

British détente

Although the Wilson government considered the Soviet Union as a moderate actor, de Gaulle's withdrawal from the integrated command in March, 1966, gave rise to fears in London that it would complement the ever existing Soviet efforts to undermine the Western alliance. Moreover, the British believed that the French-Soviet rapprochement and de Gaulle's critique of the alliance could somehow drive a wedge in between the European allies and the US. The Wilson government also feared that the French withdrawal could inspire other allies to withdraw too, at expense of immense political and strategic costs to the entire Western world.

The French withdrawal was in other words, considered a threat to alliance cohesion, and the Labour leadership saw the French variant of détente as threat to the very same alliance cohesion. The British therefore took it upon themselves to on one hand, rally the allies around the alliance, and on the other hand, promote a détente, rival to de Gaulle's variant. The British believed along with de Gaulle that the time indeed had come for a détente with the Eastern bloc, the question was exclusively about means and ways, and not the objective. The perception that the threat from the Soviet Union had largely diminished was indeed, no longer an exclusive Gaullist viewpoint but a common position throughout Western Europe including in the UK.¹⁷⁷ Kosygin, the chairman of the Council of Ministers, visited London twice during 1967, and Wilson visited Moscow no less than three times. These visits had a beneficial impact on the bilateral relation, and in the end it resulted in the establishment of a London-Moscow hotline.

¹⁷⁶ Hughes (2009), p. 106-07.

¹⁷⁷ Indeed, Kosygin, the chairman of the Council of Ministers, visited London twice during 1967, and Wilson visited Moscow no less than three times. These visits had a beneficial impact on the bilateral relation, and in the end it resulted in the establishment of a London-Moscow hotline.

The Labour government maintained that NATO was about collective deterrence against the USSR, maintenance of the US in Western Europe, and keeping the Germans down, however, Labour also argued that NATO should have a détente agenda, which was opposing the means of de Gaulle's variant.

Despite these intentions Wilson only produced a single initiative, if trade is excluded as a means of détente, which in fact had originated at the Czechoslovak embassy. The Czechoslovaks had presented Foreign Minister Stewart a document that stated that European states should respect each other's sovereignty and territorial rights, and avoid taking steps '*which might result in aggravating international tensions*',¹⁷⁸ followed by statements on renunciation of the use of force, and cooperation in trade and culture. The British presented a British draft to the North Atlantic Council (NAC), and although it was criticized by the Johnson administration for excluding America from the negotiations on a European settlement, and the Germans criticized it for not containing a reference to German unification, the NAC approved the British presented their draft to the Czechoslovak foreign ministry, which however turned it down.¹⁷⁹

Despite this lack of success, the British in the wake of the French withdrawal from the integrated command did represent a third way distinct from both the US and de Gaulle. Indeed, in the Foreign Office the idea that trade with the Eastern bloc would foster détente was common sense. In January, 1968, the Labour government concluded a trade agreement with the Soviets on technology, and throughout the late 1960s the British sought to liberalize the strategic embargo within the Co-coordinating Committee (COCOM), which proscribed export to the communist countries including China, much to the Johnson administration's anger.¹⁸⁰ In the field of trade the British détente was bilateral, as opposed to the multilateral approach Labour proposed the political détente within NATO should have. As such, the UK was a typical Western European state.

The Soviet Experience

Much in the same way as with de Gaulle Wilson's opening to the Soviet Union ended with a somewhat cold shoulder from Moscow. In the course of 1968 the Soviets presented the Wilson government with what the Wilson administration conceived as unreasonable demands to conclude a friendship treaty. Indeed, the Soviets argued that not without

¹⁷⁸ Cited from Hughes (2009) p. 117.

¹⁷⁹ Hughes (2009), p 117-118.

¹⁸⁰ Hughes (2009), pp. 121-124.

a formal British denunciation of NATO would a friendship treaty be concluded.¹⁸¹

Brief conclusion

Western Europe in the 1960s was indeed about realignments. In domestic politics, intra-European relations, and foreign policy Western Europe overcame barriers, developed new policies, and shifted the balances. Naturally all of this pushed the Johnson administration to actively respond.

¹⁸¹ Hughes (2009), pp. 130-138.

Chapter 4 Beginnings, 1963-1964

Introduction

In 1963 and 1964, policy makers in Washington in general interpreted Western Europe's policies in terms of the impact these could have on the alliance, alliance cohesion, and therefore also America's security and position in the world. The different branches within the Johnson administration did not differ in their interpretations of the beginning of the Western European realignments. It was seen as a forecast of a return to the traditional European power politics. The administration, in other words, upheld the traditional understanding of Western Europe's reason of state in the foreign policy realm.

Based on the economic recovery in Western Europe, Western European governments responded to the crisis year, and increasingly sought to realign the status quo in the transatlantic relations during 1963 and 1964, French President de Gaulle in particular, although Gaullist ideas gained momentum in Western Europe in the early 1960s. In 1963 and 1964, the contours of a Gaullist alternative to the status quo, which largely had been designed by the US, emerged. For instance, de Gaulle withdrew the French fleet from NATO, and in the process rejected the principle of integration, which Rusk characterized as an attack on the very heart of NATO and a promise to a return of power politics in Europe -- if de Gaulle's example was followed by the other allies. De Gaulle also launched a détente with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Although Chancellor Erhard was a declared *Atlanticist*, the Gaullist wing in Christian-Conservative CDU was quite strong, and the Gaullists managed to put the German unification question firmly on the political agenda in Western Germany and therefore Washington. The German question was largely interpreted in Washington as a subject that potentially could unravel the Western alliance. In addition, it posed an immediate problem for Washington. Indeed, Secretary of State Rusk found it difficult to reconcile the irreconcilable objectives of accommodating the German wishes for some sort of initiative and the administration's policy towards the Soviet Union. In fact, the German wish for an initiative could collide with US policies towards the Soviet Union.¹⁸²

The core in both the French and German critique of the status quo in the transatlantic relations was a critique of inequality in the Atlantic partnership. De Gaulle and the German nationalists argued that an American preponderance of power had resulted in an Atlantic partnership completely dominated by America in all its aspects.

¹⁸² Rusk to Bonn, March, 9, 1964. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 183.

Essentially, the Franco-German Gaullist critique was a critique of America's historically held position of unilateralism in the Western alliance.

One of the Johnson administration's answers to the different Western European challenges, which arguably had different levels of urgency, was the Bridge Building policy of 1964, with which the administration essentially sought to gain control over the allies' diverging policies and wishes, including the German unity question, and place the Western allies in line with America's new objectives in Eastern Europe. The State Department suggested an institutionalizing scheme, which reflected the traditional American thinking of creating structures within which the US could have a privileged position.

Setting the Stage the Petite Détente

On January 2, 1964, President Johnson complained to his National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy that: *'I am tired, by God, of having him [Khrushchev] be the man who wants peace and I am the guy who wants war.'*¹⁸³ Prior to this statement, Khrushchev had issued a letter to the world's governments, in which, he had spoken of American imperialism. This led to Johnson's call for *'some imaginative proposal or some initiative that we can take besides just reacting to [Khrushchev's] actions.'*¹⁸⁴ Johnson's discontent with the situation also reflected the mess the Kennedy administration and also the Johnson administration believed America had been in ever since the crisis year 1961-1962, namely that on one hand Khrushchev promoted peaceful coexistence to the liking of many Western Europeans, and on the other hand that peaceful coexistence was a crafty tactic to break up the Western alliance. Indeed it was argued concurrently in the administration in the early 1960s that the Soviet outlook had not changed.¹⁸⁵ And even though the Johnson administration aspired to continue Kennedy's petite détente,¹⁸⁶ the administration believed that the emerging Sino-Soviet rift prevented the Soviet Union from concluding any formal agreements with the US, thus a sustained détente, not that that the administration believed that a relaxation of tensions would produce any change in Soviet outlook.¹⁸⁷ This perception was upheld throughout these early years of the Johnson administration.

¹⁸³ Beschloss ed. (1997), telecon, Jan. 2, 1964, pp. 144-146.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Emb. Belgium to Dep. State, Jan 17, 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIV, Soviet Union, doc. 7; NIE, Feb. 19, 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIV, Soviet Union, doc. 11; NIE 11-9-62, FRUS, 1961-1963, vol. V, Soviet Union; Highlights of Discussion Policy Planning Mtg, August 28, 1962. FRUS 1961-1963, vol. V, Soviet Union.

¹⁸⁶ Dumbrell characterizes the 1963-1964 détente a "petite détente". « Petite » because the escalation of the Vietnam war in 1965 put a stop to the super power detente of 1963-1964. Dumbrell (2004), p. 40.

¹⁸⁷ NIE, Feb. 19, 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XIV, Soviet Union, doc. 11; Ball to LBJ, Nov. 24, 1963, LBJL, NSF, country file France, box 169.

The Johnson administration was determined, like all other administrations, to reduce the risk of nuclear war,¹⁸⁸ and shortly after Johnson took over the presidency his administration recommended continuing Kennedy's dual track policy of probing into Soviet interests in an effort to uncover possible areas of mutual interests, and deterring the USSR.¹⁸⁹ This immediately resulted in mutual cutbacks in uranium production and an attempt to increase US wheat sales to the Soviet Union, while maintaining a proper deterrence.¹⁹⁰

Johnson did aspire to somehow move the relations closer. Indeed, in his State of the Union Address in January, 1964, he announced 'ten ways' to make the world '*safe for diversity, in which all men, goods, and ideas can freely move across every border and every boundary*'. The ways that included the Soviet Union, such as cutting defense expenditures and uranium production were all informal; the US hoped that the USSR would follow by example. Only Geneva would be the venue for formal proposals. All these ways were suggested in a February, 1964, National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), which arrived at these conclusions on the premise that the Soviet Union had not changed in any fundamental way, nor was about to. Even though this hindered a formal détente and a European settlement the administration clearly intended to seek some kind of accommodation with the Soviet Union.

The administration also agreed that Khrushchev's 'tactics of détente' appealed to Western Europe, and that Khrushchev may succeed in breaking up the Western alliance if the US did not do something to counter this.¹⁹¹ In fact, as long as Khrushchev continued to relax tensions the already existing differences within the alliance would only be aggravated, and the administration argued that the need for the US to counter a break up in the Western alliance was more urgent than ever, because '*frictions in the West ... are limited during periods of tension*'.¹⁹² In other words tension produced alliance loyalty, or a relaxation of tensions produced 'frictions' in the Western alliance. Khrushchev furthermore would forego any pressure tactics, which offered little promise for any gains. Khrushchev would instead continue to seek a reduction in tension since he probably believed that '*existing differences in the West can be greatly aggravated*'.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁸ Schwartz (2003) ...

¹⁸⁹ MacArthur to Rusk, January 17, 1964 in FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XIV, Soviet Union, doc. 7; National intelligence Estimate, Feb. 19, 1964, *ibid.* doc. 11.

¹⁹⁰ Schwartz, 2003, pp-18-20

¹⁹¹ Highlights of Discussion Policy Planning Mtg, Aug. 28, 1962. FRUS, 1961-1963, vol. V, Soviet Union; Memo CIA: "The New Phase of Soviet Policy", August 9, 1963, *ibid.*

¹⁹² National Intelligence Estimate: "Soviet Foreign Policy", February 19, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XIV, Soviet Union.

¹⁹³ NIE: "Soviet Foreign Policy", February 19, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XIV, Soviet Union.

When Brezhnev took over as General Secretary in October, 1964, it only took the administration a few moments to recognize that Brezhnev portended some change that would bring the USSR further away from Washington. Indeed, the new leadership would revive support for Hanoi as an asset in the Sino-Soviet rivalry, a rivalry, which endangered the superpower rapprochement. The State Department argued that ‘peaceful coexistence’ had only been a remedy to enhance communist power throughout the world in times when the *‘relations of forces turned unfavorable’* to the Soviet Union such as the time immediately following the crisis year, which was, however, over according to the new Soviet leadership.¹⁹⁴ Nonetheless the Johnson administration was somewhat optimistic and pursued the two track policy of probing and deterring Moscow throughout 1964.

In American thinking in these early years there was no qualitative shift in the perception of the Soviet Union. Indeed, the administration still believed that a formidable nuclear deterrent was decisive, and Johnson’s probing and accommodating line in policy was more a reaction to Khrushchev’s policy than new thinking. This traditional look upon the Soviet Union reflected that the USSR was still considered a formidable enemy, which potentially could win the Cold War competition. Although the USSR was stockpiling nuclear weapons in the 1960s the administration knew that the US enjoyed a superior position militarily and economically in these early years. It was not until 1968 the administration faced the prospect of nuclear parity.¹⁹⁵

Tracing Bridge Building

The French Challenge

No one was more eager to reassert Europe and France, in particular, vis-à-vis the US and the USSR than de Gaulle. De Gaulle had challenged American leadership in Europe – or at least the status quo in the transatlantic relations ever since he came into power in 1958, and de Gaulle was determined to reassert France and overcome the loss of power and prestige of the 20th century. As Judt argues, France was lesser humiliated by the Germans than by the Anglo-American allies during and in the aftermath of the Second World War,¹⁹⁶ and de Gaulle was particularly reluctant towards Washington because of the apparent American meddling in European affairs such as the 1956 Suez crisis.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Memo Policy Planning Council: Soviet Policy in the Light of the Vietnam Crisis, February 15, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968 Vol. XIV, Soviet Union, doc. 96.

¹⁹⁵ Dumbrell (2004); Hanhimäki et al. (2012); Lundestad (2003).

¹⁹⁶ Judt (2005), p. 291, Costigliola (1992), p. 123.

¹⁹⁷ Judt (2005), p. 291.

In the fall 1958 de Gaulle proposed the Americans and the British to set up the directorate to make common decisions of military and political nature on a global scale. De Gaulle argued for a directorate because at the time the French membership of the Western alliance was associated with a lot of risks; however, France had no influence on the decision making in the alliance, decisions regarding the use of nuclear weapons in particular. Thus, France did not have a proportionate part of the decision making in Alliance matters. In 1958 de Gaulle had threatened to leave the alliance if the directorate was not set up.¹⁹⁸ In 1958 de Gaulle had also begun the French rapprochement with Germany to establish the French led Western Europe. It culminated with the Franco-German treaty of friendship in January, 1963, the so-called Elysee Treaty, in which Germany and France promised each other, among other things, political consultation in foreign policy matters. The Elysee Treaty marked France's decisive turn towards Europe.¹⁹⁹

In de Gaulle's scheme for Europe, the United Kingdom was considered an Atlantic pariah, which would function as a tie to America, thus would an admission of the UK into the EEC obstruct de Gaulle's ideas about an independent Western European bloc and eventually a 'Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals'. The Kennedy administration considered de Gaulle's rejection of the British entry into the EEC and the Franco-German rapprochement a direct challenge to American leadership in Western Europe, and de Gaulle's 'European' Europe scheme as challenge to Kennedy's Grand Design. Kennedy had launched the Grand Design for the Western Alliance in 1962, and with it, the Kennedy administration aimed at establishing 'a solid political, economic and military bloc'²⁰⁰ based on a unified Western Europe in a strong partnership with the US, thus a 'truly' Atlantic partnership. The question of UK's entry into the EEC was therefore, in American thinking, connected to the state of the NATO alliance. Indeed, the Kennedy administration often referred to the alliance's 'inner cohesion', i.e., European integration.²⁰¹ Thus, European political integration and the NATO alliance were in America's objective component parts. As de Gaulle rejected the British entry into the EEC in 1963 it also obstructed the possibility of joint efforts in NATO,²⁰² at least in the eyes of the Kennedy administration's Grand Designers. Although Schwartz argues

¹⁹⁸ Costigliola (1992), p. 123.

¹⁹⁹ Hahimäki et al. (2012) pp. 73-75; Lundestad (2003), pp. 121-123.

²⁰⁰ Hahimäki et al. (2012) p. 61.

²⁰¹ State to France, Aug. 23, 1962, FRUS, FRUS, 1961-1963, vol. XIII, Western Europe and Canada, doc. 152; State Department Scope Paper, dec. 6, 1962, FRUS, 1961-1963, vol. XIII, Western Europe and Canada, doc. 158.

²⁰² State to emb. France, Aug. 23, 1962, FRUS, FRUS, 1961-1963, vol. XIII, Western Europe and Canada, doc. 152; State Department Scope Paper, dec. 6, 1962, FRUS, 1961-1963, vol. XIII, Western Europe and Canada, doc. 158.

that the Johnson administration ‘retreated’ from the Grand Design,²⁰³ the very principles of Western European integration and Atlantic partnership was maintained throughout the Johnson presidency. Indeed, in March 1964, Rusk argued at a meeting with representatives from the EEC that, the extent to which ‘*disarray*’ in the alliance ‘*seemed to be due to unsolved intra-European problems*’²⁰⁴ and went on arguing that European integration and Atlantic partnership ‘*would be real strength*’ in the struggle against Soviet communism.²⁰⁵

Thus, in the early 1960s Gaullist ideas were not new to the administration, and neither was the French critique of US Vietnam policy. De Gaulle was the fiercest Western European critic of America’s conduct in Vietnam, and the critique escalated as the Johnson administration moved to ‘Americanize’ the war in 1963-1964, culminating with the Tonkin Gulf Resolution in August, 1964. De Gaulle represented, in fact, a dual threat to the administration’s policies; one in Europe and one in Asia. Perhaps it could even be argued that de Gaulle was a triple threat, as he moved into Latin America in 1964.

In the literature, scholars argue that the French-American crisis of 1963 was the primary and most dramatic crisis of the numerous crises de Gaulle initiated between the US and France. The Kennedy administration resolved the 1963 crisis by re-launching the Multilateral Force (MLF), and opting for the Atlantic orientated Ludwig Erhard as German Chancellor to follow Adenauer. Adenauer who had chosen the French connection for Germany over the Atlantic relations by concluding the Elysee Treaty with de Gaulle.²⁰⁶ However, the French crisis was not over by 1963. The crisis was not contained nor moved US policy towards France and US perception of France into a state of forbearance as Hanhimäki et al. argue.²⁰⁷

In late 1963 and early 1964, the administration’s different branches continued to report on de Gaulle’s criticisms of NATO. Even though de Gaulle criticized the American preponderance of power in the alliance, the French president nevertheless maintained French loyalty to the alliance, and the administration did not see any drastic French moves towards NATO on the horizon until the fall of 1964. This may be the primary reason why the different foreign policy branches in the Johnson administration concurrently maintained in 1963 and 1964, that there was nothing to do about the French critique in 1963 and 1964, indeed, if the US should respond it would demand ‘*major modifications in the policies of both*

²⁰³ Schwartz (2003), pp. 33-39.

²⁰⁴ Memcon, March 6, 1964. FRUS, vol. XIII, 1964-1968, Western Europe Region, doc. 11.

²⁰⁵ Memcon, March 6, 1964. FRUS, vol. XIII, 1964-1968, Western Europe Region, doc. 11.

²⁰⁶ Lundestad (2003), p. 126-127; Hanhimäki et al. (2012), p. 71-73.

²⁰⁷ Hanhimäki et al. (2012), p. 75.

countries’,²⁰⁸ modifications, which the US appeared quite reluctant to do. In reply to NATO Secretary General Stikker’s concerns over the spread of Gaullist ideas within the alliance in February, 1964, Rusk, the Secretary of State, replied that perhaps the US should present the allies with a paper, which assessed the ‘erosion’ of public support in America of NATO if the French continued their current behavior. The suggested approach to the Gaullist challenge was, in fact, intimidation.²⁰⁹

Although de Gaulle did not propose or present a plan to a reform of NATO in 1963 and 1964, de Gaulle’s specific critique of certain issues in the alliance all related to America’s unilateralism within the alliance. This unilateralism was most evident in the nuclear decision-making in the alliance, and the formulation of the alliance’s grand strategy; in fact, in these two policy areas America had remained detached in the alliance with Western Europe. Indeed, the European allies had had no influence on NATO’s strategy and had no formal influence on the nuclear decision-making, the US national strategy and interests as embedded within these areas was protected through the institutional structures in the alliance from interference from Western Europe.²¹⁰

The issue of national nuclear deterrents in Western Europe touched upon the entire issue the European reason of state in the foreign policy realm and the American rejection of thereof. The European allies could, perhaps as an outcome of the security dilemma, or faulty European diplomacy, initiate a nuclear war, which the US would be dragged into as a consequence of their national interest of keeping Western Europe within the Western bloc and the membership of the alliance. The exclusive American control with the nuclear weapons and the alliances grand strategy could therefore, be seen as a protective unilateralism against Western Europe’s reason of state. Conversely nuclear consultation or nuclear sharing and multilateral decision-making in the nuclear field would institutionalize the European allies’ political influence on America’s policy in the nuclear area, and perhaps inflict by institution the faulty reason of state in America’s foreign policies.

In the early 1960s de Gaulle continuously criticized (among other things) the Multilateral Force (MLF) scheme, which envisioned a nuclear force within NATO. The Eisenhower administration had proposed the MLF to on one hand give Western Germany as sense of equality within

²⁰⁸ INR to Rusk, Nov. 27, 1963. LBJL, NSF, box 169; Bohlen’s Memo Rusk to the President, Mar. 11, 1964, LBJL, NSF, box 169; CIA report: New Emphasis in French Foreign Policy, Feb. 28, 1964, LBJL, NSF, box 169.

²⁰⁹ Memcon, Feb. 4, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 6.

²¹⁰ Lundestad (2003), p. 10-11. Moreover, the US had contemplated throughout the 1950s how Britain’s national nuclear deterrent and the, at the time planned, French national nuclear deterrent could be pooled within NATO and thereby brought under US control.

the alliance, and on the other hand, to prevent the Germans from obtaining a national nuclear deterrent. In the Kennedy and Johnson administrations a group of MLF theologians argued that the multilateral nuclear force would further European integration, and before the French veto of UK entry into the EEC, they had argued that the MLF would prevent this very veto. The theologians' enthusiasm for the MLF stemmed from their belief in the Grand Design, in which the MLF was one means to further European integration and turn the Western bloc into a solid military bloc. The theologians believed that national nuclear striking forces, such as the French *Force de Frappe*, looked like a return to European power politics, and conversely not an integrated Western Europe.

However, the MLF had been stranded on how the US could model it, so that nuclear decision-making were kept on American hands, in other words, an ideational argument of how the US maintained their protective unilateralist position within the alliance in the nuclear area. The 'practical' argument against multilateral decision-making was that in a crisis situation the question of whether or not to deploy nuclear weapons would be urgent, and therefore there would be no time for the entire alliance to reach agreement on the issue. The qualms over the MLF centered on the American protective unilateralism in nuclear decision making, which de Gaulle challenged as he advocated for a "European finger" on the trigger, i.e., an independent European nuclear force.²¹¹

Closely associated with de Gaulle's criticism of the form of NATO, were the French president's overtures to both Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, overtures which were subject to scrutiny in Washington. Did de Gaulle argue for a détente with the USSR? And how did a détente with the Soviet 'menace' comply with French adherence to the alliance?

In an analysis of de Gaulle's New Year's broadcast 1963/1964 from State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) sent to McGeorge Bundy, Johnson's National Security Advisor, INR's director Thomas Hughes pondered whether a shift in de Gaulle's foreign policy was in the making. Indeed, Hughes carefully speculated if de Gaulle had recognized East Germany, when he had stated: *'envisage the day when, perhaps, in Warsaw, Prague, Pankow ... the totalitarian Communist regime ... will little by little arrive at an evolution reconcilable with our own transformation. Then, prospects will be opened to all Europe commensurate with its resources and its capabilities'*.²¹² Even though Hughes argued that this was in many ways just a repetition of de Gaulle's notion of a 'Europe from the Atlantic to

²¹¹ INR to Rusk, Nov. 27, 1963. LBJL, NSF, box 169.

²¹² INR to Rusk, Jan 2, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

the Urals', a recognition of the GDR would be a substantial addition the French policies, and a clear signal to '*a wider group in West Germany and elsewhere*', i.e., the Gaullists within the CDU and Gaullist sympathizers in the rest of Western Europe.²¹³

However, a 'profound shift' in French foreign policy was perhaps in the making according to Hughes, who asked if de Gaulle, in fact, did intend a détente with the Soviet Union. At a January 1, 1964 press conference de Gaulle had spoken of a '*spirit of détente among peoples...which has recently risen over the world*',²¹⁴ and since de Gaulle until then had seen Soviet policy lacking any real prospect of détente and therefore had rejected any negotiations between France and the USSR, and warned against the dangers in believing the USSR had significantly changed their policies, de Gaulle's new language marked this possible 'profound shift'. Hughes speculated if this new lingo marked more than a shift in French attitude towards the German question, and pondered whether de Gaulle virtually proclaimed that the time had come for a settlement of the European problem, and that Western Europe therefore had to organize itself politically in order to negotiate with the Soviet Union and by the same token exclude the U.S. from these negotiations. Hughes analysis marked the beginning of a realization in the State Department that de Gaulle would present an alternative to the US way in the relations with the Soviet Union.

Less than a month later INR argued that de Gaulle had made a '*real shift in is public position*' because he had spoken about '*the already begun attenuation of contrast and dramatic oppositions between the camps that divide the world*',²¹⁵ and INR added that de Gaulle's new perception of the Soviet 'menace' could have profound implications for the Atlantic alliance.²¹⁶ Indeed, de Gaulle's threat perception and French adherence to the alliance was closely linked according to INR.²¹⁷ De Gaulle's notion on alliances, and therefore NATO, was according Hughes that alliances should be exclusively directed at one threat, e.g., the Soviet threat, which as soon it had passed deemed the alliance redundant. Indeed, this was

²¹³ INR Intelligence Note: Shift in De Gaulle's Policy Towards Germany? Jan 2, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²¹⁴ INR Intelligence Note: Shift in De Gaulle's Policy Towards Germany? Jan 2, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²¹⁵ INR Intelligence Note: Shift in De Gaulle's Policy Towards Germany? Jan 2, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²¹⁶ INR Intelligence Note "De Gaulle's Press Conference" Jan. 31, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169; INR research memo to Rusk, April 20, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169. +++++

²¹⁷ NATO's Secretary General Dr. Stikker interpreted De Gaulle's speech in a far more urgent manner, when he argued that "this was the same type of nationalism Europeans had experienced in earlier periods" which was the "danger of De Gaulle". Johnson replied that while he understood the Secretary General's view on France "this was a problem we would have to live with". Memcon, Feb. 5, 1964. FRUS, vol. XIII, 1964-1968, Western Europe Region, doc. 7.

one reason, according to INR, why de Gaulle opposed alliance integration or the '*idea of an 'Atlantic community'*', since integration would not only bind national foreign policy into multilateralism, but also pretend a lasting structure. Furthermore, which in many ways were at the heart of Gaullist thinking, would a permanent alliance function as the most powerful member's instrument for furthering national interests.²¹⁸

By April, 1964, Hughes wrote Secretary of State Rusk that '*it is clear that when De Gaulle decides that Soviet policy has changed to the point that negotiations with the Soviet Union might produce fruitful results, the basic tie that to him justifies the Atlantic alliance will thereby begun to fray. This shift in French outlook seems underway though its pace and form are still unclear.*'.²¹⁹ Although de Gaulle's adherence to the alliance was very much dependant on the state of the East-West relations, INR also argued that French adherence after 1969²²⁰ also was dependent on the rest of the allies' willingness to accommodate French ideas about the alliance's '*nature and structure*'.²²¹ However, INR estimated in the same paper that until 1969 de Gaulle would continue his '*limited policy of dis-integrating France from NATO*'.²²²

De Gaulle indeed continued his 'dis-integration' of France from the alliance, in fact, according to Rusk, de Gaulle did not 'dis-integrate' France from the alliance but almost 'dis-integrated' the alliance. In April, 1964, just a week after INR's report, de Gaulle withdrew French naval forces from NATO's command. Rusk responded with a far from forbearing estimate of the French move: '*Broader implications of French mover are ... profoundly disturbing, because they strike at heart of NATO defense system. That system was built up over time on assumption that Alliance could neither deter or effectively withstand weight of Soviet military power only if advance arrangements were made and commitments undertaken to ensure that NATO forces would act under integrated command and in coordinated fashion of the Alliance were compelled to fight.*'²²³ De Gaulle's withdrawal of the French fleet was a clear sign that France opposed '*this philosophy and ... the established NATO military system*'²²⁴ as this inhibited French freedom of action in foreign policy. Furthermore, according to Rusk, was '*the scrapping of integrated command system ... an element in the so far unenunicated French plans for NATO reform*'.²²⁵ Rusk further argued that the loss of the integrated command system would bring the alliance into a situation that differed very little

²¹⁸ INR research memo to Rusk, April 20, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169;

²¹⁹ INR research memo to Rusk, April 20, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²²⁰ The NATO treaty was up for renewal in 1969.

²²¹ INR research memo to Rusk, April 20, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²²² INR research memo to Rusk, April 20, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²²³ Rusk to NATO posts, May, 4, 1964. FRUS, vol. XIII, 1964-1968, Western Europe Region, doc. 22.

²²⁴ Rusk to NATO posts, May, 4, 1964. FRUS, vol. XIII, 1964-1968, Western Europe Region, doc. 22.

²²⁵ Rusk to NATO posts, May, 4, 1964. FRUS, vol. XIII, 1964-1968, Western Europe Region, doc. 22.

from the situation on the continent before the First and Second World Wars. To Rusk, the integrated command system was, in other words, about bringing Western Europe past the 20th century power politics.

Although de Gaulle would not undertake any drastic moves in the future, according to Rusk at least, it was possible that other allies would follow the French example and denounce the integration principle, with the implication that Western Europe would return to traditional power politics. Therefore the problem with allied denunciations of the principle of integration should be studied and the implications for Atlantic interdependence assessed.²²⁶ Rusk instructed Robert Bowie, who would later be America's representative at the Harmel study in 1967, immediately after de Gaulle's denunciation to study '*how the Atlantic nations might improve their structures and procedures for concerting policy and action*'.²²⁷ Rusk's immediate response to de Gaulle's challenge of the integration principle was thus, to pull the alliance together to protect the principle.

Although INR along with the CIA²²⁸ believed that the French situation was not urgent, INR also presented, in the report to Rusk, the possible implications of a French-Soviet rapprochement in Western Europe in the alliance, and in the transatlantic relations. Indeed, according to INR, de Gaulle thought (about the current state of affairs) that the US and the USSR were moving towards a settlement rather than war, especially in the light of the Partial Test Ban Treaty. And that meant, according to INR's interpretation, that de Gaulle was convinced that it would lead to a '*de facto partition of the world*',²²⁹ which would mean in de Gaulle's thinking, that Moscow and Washington would continue their dominance of Eastern and Western Europe respectively. Accordingly, de Gaulle would organize Western Europe under French leadership that would negotiate a settlement of Europe with the Soviet Union.

In this settlement scheme, of a Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, German unification had a significant role to play because, as INR argued, Germany was '*indispensable*' to de Gaulle's policy's success. However, INR did not believe de Gaulle's intentions were honest, in fact, INR displayed a traditional reading of a European great power's intentions, when claiming that '*It is obvious that De Gaulle would not relish the actual reunification of Germany and the emergence of a powerful nation over 70 million people to challenge French hegemony in Western Europe*'.²³⁰ Apparently

²²⁶ Rusk to NATO posts, May, 4, 1964. FRUS, vol. XIII, 1964-1968, Western Europe Region, doc. 22.

²²⁷ FRUS, Vol. XIII, 1964-1968, Western Europe Region, doc. 40 editorial note.

²²⁸ CIA: "Special Report. New Emphasis in French Foreign Policy", 28 Feb., 1964. LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²²⁹ INR research memo to Rusk, April 20, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²³⁰ INR research memo to Rusk, April 20, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

INR held the opinion that European politicians, such as de Gaulle, still based their policies on assumptions of the pre-War period. As INR argued: *'though a united Germany will outrank France in population and economic power, its very emergence might well, in De Gaulle's calculation, consolidate France's leadership in Europe; for the other continental states – including particularly France's old allies, the Eastern European countries, and even the Soviet Union itself – would look to France as a major factor in 'containing' Germany's increased power'*.²³¹ INR appears unable to interpret de Gaulle's policies and imagine his political calculations in different terms than the traditional European power game. This is in particular interesting since, as scholars of the euro-détente argue, de Gaulle along with the West German governments actually initiated the European détente in the early 1960s, indeed, the Franco-German rapprochement was a precondition for the euro-détente,²³² a perspective which INR failed to grasp.

By the spring 1964, the French challenge was very real, and the contours of a Franco-American conceptual rivalry emerged. Indeed, the essential implication of de Gaulle's policy and political concepts was that they were competing alternatives to the American concepts for the organization of Europe and not least America's alliance concept.

De Gaulle had denounced the principle of integration in the alliance, which, according to Rusk, was an attack on the very heart of NATO and potentially had profound disturbing consequences, indeed, the alliance could unravel and Western Europe could return to old habits. The administration feared that Gaullist ideas could spread throughout the alliance, and in particular in Germany.

De Gaulle's possible policy shift towards the USSR was considered equally disturbing. On one hand, de Gaulle's rapprochement with the Soviet Union would, according to INR, *'if it is not arrested, ... be of major importance for France's relations with its allies'*²³³ and therefore the alliance organization, mostly because de Gaulle held the opinion that the alliance was less needed as the threat from the Soviet Union diminished, but also because de Gaulle, according to INR, contemplated to settle the European problem with the USSR at the expense of the US. On the other hand, Gaullism was also criticized for being traditional European power politics. INR commented that *'It is somewhat paradoxical that such an evolution in French policy, while it seemingly would bring De Gaulle ... more into line with recent developments in American policy [the petite détente], would signify a further shift of France away from the basis of its adherence to the Atlantic alliance'*.²³⁴

Thus, the perception of Gaullist France in the administration in these early years was one of potentiality. De Gaulle had the potential to a

²³¹ INR research memo to Rusk, April 20, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²³² Hanhimäki ...; Westad & Villaume (eds.).

²³³ INR research memo to Rusk, April 20, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²³⁴ INR research memo to Rusk, April 20, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

complete game change in Europe and in the transatlantic relations, and as 1964 progressed the administration increasingly came to question hitherto position of France in the alliance and ultimately French adherence to the alliance.

Gaullist ideas and the rest of the allies

Since de Gaulle's shift in policy towards the Soviet Union was more or less on its way in the spring 1964, at least according to the State Department, the rest of Western Europe and the reaction of these states to Gaullism, and the French rejection of the principle of integration in particular, were of prime importance to the administration. The different branches of the administration had different interpretations, and saw a variety of problems. The appeal of Gaullist ideas to the West German government, which de Gaulle was assumed to be appealing to, was one thing; another was Western Europe as an entity.

Although not directly commenting on INR's (long) analysis on de Gaulle's possible policy shift, William Tyler, the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, commented in the spring 1964, to Bundy, Johnson's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, on a report from Charles Bohlen, US ambassador to France, that it may very well be that even though other Western European governments did not directly agree with de Gaulle's policies and philosophy, de Gaulle nevertheless gave '*expression to a certain sentiment*'²³⁵ in Western Europe. Tyler carefully argued that there was a 'confused sense' in Western Europe, and that it was both possible and necessary for Europe to have interests '*which do not in all cases spring from a conception of the world identical with that held by the US*'.²³⁶ Indeed, according to Tyler, as Western Europe moved closer in political unity and technical integration, it would result in '*a permissible differentiation between the European and the United States vision of the world and definition of interests.*'²³⁷ It was 'permissible' to Tyler, because '*Europeans consider Europe's security to be basically dependent on close relations with the United States.*'

Tyler, in other words, provided a somewhat idealist analysis of Europe; through the political integration would 'new' European policy conceptions arise, which were not of the old times, though with the proviso that Europe remained dependent on the US for security. Tyler's idealism may also be a reason why he, in conclusion, warned against simplifying and thereby underestimating quality and strength of Gaullist ideas. According to Tyler someone in State Department had cried at the skies in response to de Gaulle's rejection of UK's entry into the EC in

²³⁵ Tyler to Bundy, Mar. 12, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²³⁶ Tyler to Bundy, Mar. 12, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²³⁷ Tyler to Bundy, Mar. 12, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

1963: *'Tell me, ye Gods, how is it possible for one lonely, elderly, ruler of a small country to frustrate the desires and aspirations of 250 million other Europeans'*.²³⁸ The answer Tyler provided was that nothing was as simple as that, and that de Gaulle's *'ascendency rests to some extent on his ability to express sentiments which his fellow countrymen and many Europeans recognize and with which they associate themselves'*.²³⁹ The CIA also warned against simplifying Gaullism, when the agency in early 1964 underscored that what de Gaulle did, he did not do to *'irritate'* the US, but rather de Gaulle was preoccupied in his single-mindedness with advancing French national interest regardless *'whose toes are stepped on'*.²⁴⁰

The CIA argued in July, 1964, in an analysis of de Gaulle's emerging Eastern European policies that the Eastern European states reaction's to de Gaulle's initiatives²⁴¹ had been mixed. Nonetheless, the CIA argued that de Gaulle intended to reach out to Eastern Europe for a number of reasons, among these to place France in a leading role in the West's attempts to reach out to Eastern Europe. The agency argued that de Gaulle 'probably' anticipated that Eastern Europe would break free from Soviet hegemony, and that this would *'produce a situation similar to that which prevailed in Europe before World War II'*.²⁴² However, contrary to this situation, the competing national interests would be curbed by de Gaulle's French-led loose confederation in Europe, especially the German interest. When Eastern Europe saw this development, de Gaulle believed – at least according to the CIA – it would attract Eastern Europe to Western Europe.²⁴³ The egalitarian Western Europe indeed emerged as a viable alternative to the either communism or capitalism in CIA's estimate of de Gaulle's thinking.²⁴⁴ In the meantime however, de Gaulle would probably commence on a program of expanded trade and commercial ties to accompany his already existing technical and scientific exchange program.

However, Eastern Europe was one thing, another the Soviet Union and Germany. According to the CIA, de Gaulle now appeared to have changed his 'assessment of the Soviet threat', and believed that Soviet policy have evolved to the point where negotiations on European question may be undertaken. Although, according to the CIA, what the

²³⁸ Tyler to Bundy, Mar. 12, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²³⁹ Tyler to Bundy, Mar. 12, 1964, LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²⁴⁰ CIA: Special Report. New Emphasis in French Foreign Policy", 28 Feb., 1964. LBJL, NSF, France, box 169.

²⁴¹ De Gaulle had embarked upon a program of expanding trade, cultural, and scientific cooperation between France and Eastern Europe.

²⁴² CIA July 17, 1964. LBJL, NSF, France, box 170.

²⁴³ CIA July 17, 1964. LBJL, NSF, France, box 170.

²⁴⁴ Villaume & Westad (2010).

French president really worried about was a German-Russian agreement from which France would be excluded.²⁴⁵

De Gaulle was, in other words, all over Europe and appeared to move even closer to the Soviet Union in the summer of 1964, according to various branches in the administration. The CIA in effect sketched out, what would be a conceptual conflict between the US détente concept, which yet had to emerge, and the French variant of détente, a conflict, which would play out at the Harmel exercise in 1967, as will be discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. The CIA also put a finger on a more immediate problem that, in fact, extended beyond the Franco-American relationship to America's relations with Western Europe, namely the one of Western Europe's bilateral relations with Eastern Europe.

Despite Tyler's estimate that de Gaulle expressed a common Western European sentiment, some allies most notably the Belgians interpreted de Gaulle's actions as a threat to the alliance. Belgian foreign minister, Paul Henri Spaak, who was a declared Atlanticist and anti-Gaullist, proposed in April, 1964, that NATO set up a wise men's group to study the 'reorganization' of NATO to smoke out France.²⁴⁶ Although Tyler recognized '*that if the present trend continue, the result might ultimately be disastrous for NATO*',²⁴⁷ Tyler held the opinion that a review of NATO structure was premature, and indeed, the administration had 'grave reservations' about a wise men's group, as elections in both UK and the US was upcoming. Instead Tyler suggested a more '*subtle approach to keep NATO moving without French participation*'.²⁴⁸ Indeed, Rusk stressed at the NATO ministerial meeting in May, 1964, that the US's 'basic view' was to find a way to continue NATO business as usual despite the French obstructionism.²⁴⁹ Although, the State Department rejected Spaak's proposal, the department was, in fact, ready to discuss '*NATO in general from above*'²⁵⁰ with the proviso that it was after the US elections in November, 1964.

German Gaullism

As France began stirring things up in the Atlantic alliance, Western Germany and a possible Gaullist turn in German politics increasingly

²⁴⁵ CIA July 17, 1964. LBJL, NSF, France, box 170.

²⁴⁶ Tyler to MacArthur, Apr. 2, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 14.

²⁴⁷ Tyler to MacArthur, Apr. 2, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 14.

²⁴⁸ Tyler to MacArthur, Apr. 2, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 14.

²⁴⁹ Memcon, May 12, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 24.

²⁵⁰ Bonn to Rusk pass to WH, Jul. 14, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 29.

worried the Johnson administration. The Gaullist wing within the CDU/CSU was seen as something that could potentially break Germany from the West. Despite this was more or less the same situation the administration faced with France, the possible loss of Germany was unthinkable. Germany was America's most important ally in Europe, and any loss of Germany would have a devastating impact on America's position in the overall East-West conflict.²⁵¹ The traditional thinking on Germany's importance for American security and European stability was still the guiding line for American thinking, and the Johnson administration still believed that Germany needed to be contained. However, Germany had recovered economically, as the rest of Western Europe, and the economic recovery somewhat placed Germany in a different position of strength than hitherto to the eyes of the administration.

The Johnson administration had already had talks with a leading German Gaullist, Karl Theodor Guttenberg in November, 1963. Erhard (CDU) had taken over the Chancellorship in October, 1963, from Konrad Adenauer (CDU), who had been responsible for the German rapprochement with France, and who, by many in the Johnson administration at least, was considered a Gaullist. Contrary to Erhard, who the administration after a little hesitation²⁵² considered an Atlanticist, and therefore an ally in the American struggle against a Gaullist turn in CDU and possibly the whole of Western Germany, a turn which would mean a complete game change in the Cold War.

Chancellor Erhard was not a strong leader as Adenauer had been. The CDU was in many ways in a crisis of leadership, which partly explains why the Gaullists suddenly gained momentum within the party. The Johnson administration detected this leadership crisis, but was equally preoccupied with Erhard's orientation and position on key political questions, such as European integration and Atlantic partnership. Even though the Johnson administration did not really consider the German Gaullists as de Gaulle replica, but more German nationalists, the administration referred to the nationalist turn in German politics as both Gaullist and nationalist. In November, 1963, Coburn Kidd, a staff member at the American embassy to Germany, reported on a conversation with Guttenberg, the contents of which were received in the administration as '*a matter obviously familiar already*',²⁵³ however, as Guttenberg was considered a leading Gaullist whom others were inclined

²⁵¹ Schwartz (2003); Costigliola (1996).

²⁵² Memcon Erhard and Johnson (etc.), Nov. 26, 1963. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 183.

²⁵³ Kidd to EUR:GER Oct. 29, 1963. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 183.

to follow,²⁵⁴ Guttenberg should meet with LBJ's national security advisor Bundy.²⁵⁵

Kidd's loyal rendering of this particular German Gaullism can be summarized as a German criticism of America's privileged position in Western Europe, and the American unilateralist behavior in NATO. Guttenberg criticized the Atlantic partnership for not being a partnership, in fact: *'partnership to his mind, implied a certain degree of equality. If one partner could call all the shots and the other was obliged to conform, it could hardly be called a partnership. Therefore he was for a strong Europe as De Gaulle was ... He believed that a corollary of this was that military strength these days required nuclear weapons, and a strong Europe should have its own nuclear weapons'*.²⁵⁶

The German Gaullists were in other words, completely in line with de Gaulle on the MLF question. Apart from criticizing the American preponderance of power in Western Europe, Guttenberg also addressed the possible super power détente, which to him *'was bound to give rise to misgivings'*.²⁵⁷ Accordingly, Guttenberg argued that US détente policy towards the USSR *'would turn out to be a policy of tacit acceptance of the status quo ... which might later be formalized'*.²⁵⁸ Indeed, Guttenberg suspected that the US had a policy of *'delimiting the spheres of power where they are now'*, which *'hardly amounts to Atlantic partnership'*, and he threatened, while referring to Rappello, that Germany and the rest of Western Europe might be pushed to cut a deal with the Kremlin in this *'business in making one's peace with the Soviets'*.²⁵⁹ Eventually Guttenberg had a meeting with Rostow and Tyler from the State Department.²⁶⁰

These two component parts of on one hand, a critique of the American preponderance of power and the subsequent lack of equality in the decision making the alliance, i.e., American unilateralism in foreign policy, and on the other hand, the fear of super power condominium in Europe was the core in the German Gaullists' policies, or, perhaps more accurately, the Gaullists' criticism of the current state of transatlantic affairs, which would gain political ground in Western Germany during the 1960s. Thus, despite a lack of complete Gaullist concord in Germany and France, the Gaullists in France and Germany at least shared the critique of US unilateralism and the notion of the need for a strong, nuclear armed Europe. The German Gaullists managed to put the

²⁵⁴ Kidd to EUR:GER Oct. 29, 1963. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 183.

²⁵⁵ Williams (EUR:GER) to Klein (NSC Staff), Nov. 4, 1963. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 183.

²⁵⁶ Kidd to EUR:GER Oct. 29, 1963. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 183.

²⁵⁷ Kidd to EUR:GER Oct. 29, 1963. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 183.

²⁵⁸ Kidd to EUR:GER Oct. 29, 1963. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 183.

²⁵⁹ Kidd to EUR:GER Oct. 29, 1963. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 183.

²⁶⁰ Memcon state dec. 1963. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 183.

question of German reunification on the political agenda in Bonn and therefore also Washington.

NATO's Instrumentality

The German question, or perhaps more accurately; the problem the German problem posed to American policies, generated extensive debate in the administration, and there were a wealth of perspectives and perceptions of this problem. This reflects both the importance of Germany to America, and exactly how difficult it was for the administration to find a solution to the problem.

Apart from arguing for a strong Europe and turn towards the French, the Gaullists in CDU/CSU claimed in early 1964, that the US had lost interest in German unification at the expense of the American pursuit of a *détente* with the Soviet Union. The German Gaullists had very specific positions on nuclear weapons, and German unity as they rejected to recognize the Oder-Neisse border. Chancellor Erhard's pro-American policy was consistently criticized by the Gaullists, and even though the Chancellor tried to accommodate the criticism with the 'policy of movement', the Gaullists continued to 'complicate' German politics – at least in the eyes of the State Department.²⁶¹ The 'policy of movement' did not however, entail any shift away the Hallstein Doctrine, and in American optics, the policy had no real substance.

Despite this lack of substance, the Peace Plan, which laid out the Erhard administration's policy of movement, generated debate within the State Department. The debate implicitly evolved around protecting America's objectives towards the Soviet Union from German obstructionism.²⁶²

In January, 1964, the Erhard government presented the Peace Plan to the 4-power ambassadorial group. The Peace Plan was, according to David Klein, a senior NSC Staff member of the White House, essentially a 'non-plan' put forward for domestic reasons, to please the Gaullists.²⁶³ The Peace Plan proposed the establishment of a permanent four power council, which would work towards a reunification of Germany. The plan was based on idealist principles, such as the right to national self-determination, and the establishment of permanent four power council anchored in international law was essentially a multilateralist scheme, which would subordinate America's policies towards both the German

²⁶¹ Schwartz, 2003, pp. 15-16. The Gaullists posed an immediate problem for the entire question of European political unity, i.e., British entry into the EEC, the German unity question appears rated second in this possible game change in German politics in January 1964. See Bonn to Rusk, Jan. 25, 1964. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 183.

²⁶² Bonn to DepState, May 16, 1964. FRUS, vol. XV, Germany and Berlin, doc. 38.

²⁶³ Klein (WH) to NSC staff, Jan. 19, 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XV, Germany and Berlin, doc. 3.

reunification and the Soviet Union. Later in the spring 1964, Rusk in an attempt to overcome this subordination – and make the German proposal into something workable, suggested that a four power council should exclusively work with a list of subjects that should be decided upon beforehand, i.e., controlled by the American administration.²⁶⁴

However, because the administration had a ‘*deep desire to achieve a breakthrough in East-West relations*’,²⁶⁵ the German desires and attempts, as the ones put forward with the Peace Plan, could collide with the administration’s policies towards the Soviet Union. Rusk regarded the German Peace Plan or even the German desires for some progress on the German question a problem for America’s policies towards the Soviet Union; any move the Germans would propose or even take regarding German unity affected, according to Rusk, the East–West balance, and America’s relationship with the Soviet Union. The problem with the German peace plan and desires was therefore, in the eyes of Rusk, a problem of how to strike a balance between two essentially ‘*inconsistent objectives*’ namely, satisfying a German need for an initiative and the American ‘*desire*’ of ‘*not to become too associated with any proposals on German problem put forward to Soviets unless these proposals are likely to appear convincing as sincere attempt to move forward toward basis for real negotiations with the Soviets*’.²⁶⁶ Rusk added that the German proposal ‘*obviously*’ did ‘*not meet the latter criterion*’.²⁶⁷

The German quest for unity did therefore have, according to Rusk, a potential impact on America’s policies towards the Soviet Union, and more accurately America’s standing in its relationship with the Soviet Union. The impact the German unity question potentially had on the alliance was also alarming. Moreover, the new situation in Eastern Europe complicated the West German situation even further in American optics.

At a recent Atlantic Policy Advisory Group (APAG) meeting,²⁶⁸ which Rostow, the Director of State Department’s Policy Planning Council, reported from, the Policy Planning Council had presented a paper, in which it was argued that the ‘*evolutionary developments*’ in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union might ‘*present perils and opportunities for Western policy – particularly in terms of German unification*’.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁴ Memo by Kitchen to Rostow, June 19, 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. 15, Germany and Berlin, doc. 59; Klein (WH) to NSC staff, Jan. 19, 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XV, Germany and Berlin, doc. 3.

²⁶⁵ Bonn to DepState, Jan. 21, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XV, Germany and Berlin, doc. 5.

²⁶⁶ Rusk to Bonn, drafted March, 9, 1964. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 183.

²⁶⁷ Rusk to Bonn, drafted March, 9, 1964. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 183.

²⁶⁸ APAG was a part of NATO.

²⁶⁹ Highlights from the Sec’s Planning Mtg. Mar., 31, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. 17, Eastern Europe, doc. 3. Since the 1950s the administrations had struggled with developing a policy towards Eastern Europe, and in the beginning of the 1960s

Although the Western European representatives agreed with the US that ‘civilizing currents’ were at work in Eastern Europe, and that these should be promoted, the Western concert stopped. The Western European representatives generally disagreed with the concept presented by the Council at the meeting. They disagreed on the extent to which Eastern Europe could be considered separate from the Soviet Union, and ‘*on the importance for Western policy of current trends (and of Eastern Europe itself), and on the degree to which the west can influence events in Eastern Europe*’.²⁷⁰ There was, in fact, a substantial disagreement among the partners in the Atlantic partnership about the importance and possibilities of the developments in Eastern Europe for the West, including the German question. This was a disagreement that NATO’s Secretary General Stikker already had reported or confirmed in his meeting with Rusk earlier in March, 1964.²⁷¹ Furthermore, the APAG representatives disagreed as to how the German problem fitted in this policy towards the Eastern bloc. However, the ‘*basic lesson*’ from the APAG meeting was, according to Rostow, that the future of Eastern Europe was bound to questions about German unity. The West German representative at the APAG meeting had ‘*pointed to the rising German sentiment for unification and forecast that the issue would prove a critical test of the NATO alliance*’,²⁷² speculating that in the event of an East German uprising, the Federal Republic would leave the alliance if nothing was done to move the German cause forward.²⁷³ The West German representative thus brought the question of German unity into the broader framework of alliance cohesion.

In Rostow’s report to Rusk, he argued that the German situation could be contained and that it was possible to hinder a ‘*nationalist explosion if we in the Alliance work out with the Germans a policy that promises to move in the direction of unity*’.²⁷⁴ The alliance was, according to Rostow, an instrument to both contain Germany and somehow disguise the American hand. Rostow argued that, luckily, there was ‘*an environment of somewhat increased willingness to move forward on an Atlantic basis where progress is possible*’²⁷⁵ in Western Europe, in fact, Rostow believed that the ‘*classic*

influential foreign policy thinkers, such as Brzezinski had argued for the need for a separate Eastern European policy, as the containment policy was not really directed at Eastern Europe. See Thomasen (2013)...

²⁷⁰ Record of Discussion. Highlights from the Secretary’s Policy Planning Mtg held March 31, 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. 17, Eastern Europe, doc. 3.

²⁷¹ Memcon, March 18, 1964. FRUS, Vol. XIII, 1964-1968, Western Europe Region, doc. 12

²⁷² Record of Discussion. Highlights from the Secretary’s Policy Planning Mtg held March 31, 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. 17, Eastern Europe, doc. 3.

²⁷³ Highlights from the Sec’s Planning Mtg. Mar., 31, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. 17, Eastern Europe, doc. 3.

²⁷⁴ Rostow to Rusk, Mar. 25, 1964. LBJL, NSF, European integration, box 162.

²⁷⁵ Rostow to Rusk, Mar. 25, 1964. LBJL, NSF, European integration, box 162.

pattern’ of Europe first and then the Atlantic partnership, had diminished somewhat in the light of de Gaulle’s excesses. Therefore, Rostow argued, the situation offered the US ‘*an opportunity for leadership and forward movement in a number of areas*’,²⁷⁶ one of which was German unification.

The instrumental value of NATO was not something new however; Rostow also suggested that the alliance members ‘*by orchestrated bilateralism*’ should enlarge trade and cultural relations with Eastern Europe. The concept of coordination of the bilateral relations had been discussed at the APAG meeting. Rostow’s proposal to orchestrate Western Europe’s bilateralist behavior was a response to the emerging trend in Western Europe of individual states seeking and expanding trade and cultural relations with the Eastern bloc ‘outside’ the European and Atlantic frameworks. The orchestration was eventually decided upon with the State Department’s suggestion to the bridge building policy in the late summer 1964.

Rostow’s proposal to orchestrate Western European dealings with Eastern Europe through the alliance moved the alliance into a different, essentially political sphere than the traditional sphere of security. The orchestration was also means to promote Western unity because of de Gaulle’s blockage of further Western European political integration, and the appeal of Gaullism to some Germans and possibly other Western Europeans. Indeed, Rusk held the opinion that it was urgent to ‘*to get a common appreciation of what is going on in the Communist world*’,²⁷⁷ and that NATO had an active role to play in the matter of Western Europe’s relations with the Eastern bloc.²⁷⁸ Rusk, in other words, believed it was necessary to replace the temporarily halted European integration scheme with an Atlantic framework, reflecting that the US was not willing to give up on an instrument to maintain Western European unity, Atlantic partnership, and not least give up on the traditional position the US had in Western Europe and for the West’s policies as a result of these frameworks. Equally important, Rusk no longer cited de Gaulle as the only threat to this structure; the bilateral Western European outreach to Eastern Europe was cited as another.²⁷⁹

Rostow also reported to Johnson on his trip to Western Europe, and recommended, as he had to Rusk, that the US moved forward on the German question, primarily because if the US did not react to the German sentiment of a break away from the Hallstein Doctrine, the Germans may move in a different direction that the US interest dictated.

²⁷⁶ Rostow to Rusk, Mar. 25, 1964. LBJL, NSF, European integration, box 162.

²⁷⁷ Rusk to NATO capitals et al., Oct. 8, 1964. FRUS, Vol. XIII, 1964-1968, Western Europe Region, doc. 39.

²⁷⁸ Rusk to NATO capitals et al., Oct. 8, 1964. FRUS, Vol. XIII, 1964-1968, Western Europe Region, doc. 39.

²⁷⁹ Rusk to NATO capitals et al., Oct. 8, 1964. FRUS, Vol. XIII, 1964-1968, Western Europe Region, doc. 39.

Rostow explained to Johnson that since the European integration process had stopped (temporarily) and the *'thaw'* in Eastern Europe was rapidly proceeding, the original idea of tying Germany into the West and from there proceed with unification, was expiring. According to Rostow, the West was losing its bargaining position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and Eastern Germany. The European integration therefore needed to be replaced with an Atlantic structure.

The State Department did, in other words, not believe that the German question and Germany could be handled outside a Western structure without it being somehow counterproductive or even dangerous for America's interest. According to Rostow, the problem with handling Germany outside a 'structure' was, that on one hand the German political and public opinion's chief concern was unification, and on the other hand the Erhard administration had no 'ready answer' to the question of unification. Therefore Rostow argued, *'over time this fact may progressively weaken their [the government] hold on German public opinion, unless other opportunities for deployment of German energies westward arise and unless progress – even modest progress – toward unification is made'*.²⁸⁰ Coupled with the *'two political bases for the intensified'* search for unification, namely a young generation preoccupied with their fellow Germans, and more importantly the entry into a new period, in which *'German prosperity is taken for granted and has ceased to be a satisfactorily outlet for German energies and ambitions'*,²⁸¹ the need for the US to somehow contain and bind Germany into the Western world was, in fact, urgent.²⁸²

Although Rostow underlined that he was not describing a political crisis in Germany, and that Schroeder's foreign policy was quite *'solid'*, Rostow put forward that *'anxiety stems from underlying trends, which could become dangerous to common Western interests'*.²⁸³ Rostow therefore urged Johnson *'to press ahead now with such ventures as will help to attract, engage, and bind the Germans to the West and stay close to them in all East-West matters'*.²⁸⁴ Rostow did not believe that the current European integration was able to tie Germany firmly into the West, in fact, the US *'should be ready to move with those European countries that are willing to proceed on an Atlantic basis ... leaving the door to a larger European role, when Europe resumes movement toward unity'*.²⁸⁵

The administration still believed in the necessity of European integration, however, as the integration process was inhibited by de Gaulle's veto of British entry into the EEC the administration clearly felt

²⁸⁰ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 9, 1964. LBJL, NSF, European integration, box 162.

²⁸¹ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 9, 1964. LBJL, NSF, European integration, box 162.

²⁸² Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 9, 1964. LBJL, NSF, European integration, box 162.

²⁸³ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 9, 1964. LBJL, NSF, European integration, box 162.

²⁸⁴ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 9, 1964. LBJL, NSF, European integration, box 162.

²⁸⁵ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 9, 1964. LBJL, NSF, European integration, box 162.

a need to replace the European integration machinery with an Atlantic scheme to contain Western Germany and probably the rest of Western Europe.

The State Department's thoughts on the necessity of European integration and a Western structure reflected the traditional Euro-skepticism. The structures were necessary to guard against the Germans drifted off, thus promoting the conception that Europe drifts according to narrow national interests without regard for the greater good. Was this an expression of an implicit idea that Europe inevitably would fall prey to earlier times' nationalist, power policies? Indeed, Rostow concluded on the current Western European political situation that *'the political raw materials are there to move forward in the Atlantic on a modest piecemeal basis. It will require steady U.S. leadership and our sense of direction. If we fail to organize these new elements of European self-confidence, however, there are dangers of fragmentation in the alliance centered on German political life'*.²⁸⁶

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The Johnson administration responded to the new circumstances for the administration's European policy with the bridge building policy. On one hand, the challenge from de Gaulle, the beginning of a bilateral Western European detente, the idea of a strong independent Europe, which Tyler had argued was shared by other Europeans, and the (possible) German nationalist turn and calls for an approach to unification was new developments, which demanded a response if America was to maintain the structures of the Western world, including the privileged position the US held via these structures. On the other hand, the administration's concurrence on the necessity of replacing the European integration structure with an Atlantic structure was already agreed upon. However, the developments in Eastern Europe also demanded a response. The CIA continued to report on the stirrings in Eastern Europe during the spring, and the idea that the German problem was linked to developments in Eastern Europe, the political circumstances in Eastern and Western Europe came together. The allies' disagreement about the potential of the centrifugal forces in Eastern Europe and what course to proceed collided with the administration's thinking on US objectives in Eastern Europe.

Although the Johnson administration did not seek a solution to the West European challenges exclusively through the bridge building policy, the policy was designed to overcome these problems by building an Atlantic structure to contain and control the Western European policies towards Eastern Europe, and maintain a solid position for America in Western Europe.

²⁸⁶ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 9, 1964. LBJL, NSF, European integration, box 162.

In NSAM 304 of June 3, 1964, Johnson called for the development of a policy based on his recent statement on Eastern Europe: *“We will continue to build bridges across the gulf which has divided us from Eastern Europe. These will be bridges of increased trade, of ideas, of visitors and of humanitarian aid”. The President would like the Department of State to complete ... recommendations which translates this statement of policy into an action programs for each Eastern European state ... and, at the same time examine the possibilities of multilateralizing these relations in Eastern and Western Europe*.²⁸⁷ With this latter addition, the Johnson administration looked for ways to enroll Western Europe into the American ‘action program’, essentially looking into the possibilities for enacting and streamlining the West European policies with the administration’s new Eastern European policy, and overcome the current bilateralism.²⁸⁸ Although Johnson called for ways to multilateralize the relations between Eastern and Western Europe, the US set out to maintain control with Europe’s reconciliation with and policies towards Eastern Europe. Indeed, before handing in their policy suggestion, the State Department discussed two essential, conceptual issues. First, should the foreseen ‘reconciliation’ with Eastern Europe be of Atlantic or European orientation? Should the US ‘trump’ a new Eastern European Policy or ‘conform’ US policy with that of Western Europe? And second, should the reconciliation also include East Germany?²⁸⁹

The argument for an Atlantic orientation focused on the weak political ‘structure’ in the Western Europe. An association of Eastern Europe with Western Europe would only, the argument went, ‘dilute’ the political structure in Western Europe further, and Eastern Europe should therefore develop closer links with the Atlantic community ‘as a whole’.²⁹⁰ Others argued for a middle way, namely that it would be wiser before ‘trumpeting’ a new policy toward East Europe to ‘conform’ US policy with that of Western Europe, the US should ‘catch up’ with the European allies, and then push the new policy.²⁹¹

Underneath the arguments for either ‘orientation’ lurked the question about what position the US should have in European matters. An association of Eastern Europe with Western Europe would reduce American influence on Western Europe’s policies and policymaking towards Eastern Europe and by proxy towards the Soviet Union, by

²⁸⁷ NSAM 304 Subject: US Relations with Eastern Europe, June 3, 1964 in FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XVII, Eastern Europe, doc. 4.

²⁸⁸ The Bridge Building policy was also a response to calls for an actual Eastern European policy separated from the Soviet Union among influential foreign policy thinkers, such as Brzezinski. See Thomasen (2013).

²⁸⁹ Policy planning Mtg, July, 27, 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XVII, Eastern Europe, doc. 8.

²⁹⁰ Policy planning Mtg, July, 27, 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. 17, Eastern Europe, doc. 8.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

handling Western Europe control of policies via association. If the goal was to present a common Western front, US policies towards the Eastern bloc would essentially be subordinated to Western Europe, and in principle deprive the US from retaining unilateralism. Whereas the Atlantic structure would both grant the US the possibility to closely direct the relations between Eastern and Western Europe, and retain the unilateralist position through the Atlantic structure, as the US had managed to do on certain vital policy areas in NATO so far. In fact, the real question was if the US was willing to loosen their control with Western Europe's policies? In the end the State Department proposed an Atlantic orientation.

The State Department's proposal for a new policy towards Eastern Europe, aimed at 'evolutionize' Eastern European communism from within by 'building bridges' to sustain and facilitate the changes that was already going on in the area.²⁹² This would, it was believed, create '*progress toward the realization of our ultimate objective in East Europe*', which was establishing societies that enjoyed '*national independence, security, and a normal relationship with all other countries*' (including the Soviet Union), that would '*mean the final dismantling of the Iron Curtain and the free association of East Europe and the West*'.²⁹³ This evolutionary Eastern European policy should be closely related to the solution of the German problem, to the policy toward the Soviet Union, and the Western European policy. The policies for '*for achieving West European unity*', Eastern European evolution, and peace with the Soviet Union '*should move forward together*'.²⁹⁴ This naturally left the administration with quite a coordinating task, both coordination of US policies towards Eastern and Western Europe, and coordination '*among Western countries in building relationships with East Europe*'.²⁹⁵

According to the Department of State's proposal, the coordination of the Western world's policies would increase the chances of realizing the American objectives in Eastern Europe, and secure that the US was not 'dismantled' from Europe.²⁹⁶ The department believed that the risk

²⁹² Paper Prepared in the Department of State NSAM 304 Action program for US Relations with East Europe, undated in FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XVII, Eastern Europe, doc. 12.

²⁹³ Paper Prepared in the Department of State NSAM 304 Action program for US Relations with East Europe, undated in FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XVII, Eastern Europe, doc. 12.

²⁹⁴ Paper Prepared in the Department of State NSAM 304 Action program for US Relations with East Europe, undated in FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XVII, Eastern Europe, doc. 12.

²⁹⁵ Paper Prepared in the Department of State NSAM 304 Action program for US Relations with East Europe, undated in FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XVII, Eastern Europe, doc. 12.

²⁹⁶ Paper Prepared in the Department of State NSAM 304 Action program for US Relations with East Europe, undated in FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XVII, Eastern Europe, doc. 12.

of being excluded in the process of drawing Eastern and Western Europe together was already quite advanced, because of the bilateral relations between Eastern and Western Europe, and the US was far behind Western Europe in *'pushing contacts with the Eastern European nations'*.²⁹⁷ In fact, already in March, 1964, Rusk had in an apologetic manner told representatives from the EEC that *'for the past fifteen years the United States had been a minority of one within the Alliance in East-West trade. Perhaps we had been wrong and our allies right, and maybe as the subject is explored a compromise can be found'*.²⁹⁸ A minority position about which, at the Policy Council meeting, it had been claimed that the Europeans was *'not at present unhappy to see the US a minority of one on COCOM'*.²⁹⁹ NATO was central for streamlining Western Europe's policies with US policies,³⁰⁰ and the State Department proposed that NATO should be the forum for coordination of trade and credit policies, which were the primary means for the administration's new Eastern European policy. Naturally, consultation with Western Europe on other subjects was foreshadowed, and that was attempted institutionalized in 'quadripartite consultations' and periodic meetings with Western officials responsible for dealing with Eastern Europe.³⁰¹

The idea of institutionalizing a Western policy towards Eastern Europe beyond the NATO structure, which suggests that every aspect of an Eastern European policy should be institutionalized, reflects the traditional American policy thinking of creating structures within which the US have a privileged position based on power, indeed, it appears as if 'institutionalizing' was a default setting in American political thinking towards Europe. To create structures and policy schemes, in which the US had a position and opportunity to direct and streamline Western European policies to that of the US. This idea sprung from the immediate post-war period, and was designed to overcome and reject the European reason of state, and retain a certain level of protective unilateralism in foreign policy.

²⁹⁷ Paper Prepared in the Department of State NSAM 304 Action program for US Relations with East Europe, undated in FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XVII, Eastern Europe, doc. 12. [tjek note]

²⁹⁸ Memcon, March 6, 1964. FRUS, Vol. XIII, 1964-1968, Western Europe Region, doc. 11.

²⁹⁹ Policy planning Mtg, July, 27, 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. 17, Eastern Europe, doc. 8.

³⁰⁰ "Concert with NATO members" on bringing selected East European states into certain multilateral organizations, and coordination of trade and credit policies toward East Europe. Furthermore, the action program did only speak of East European association with the West, and not West Europe.

³⁰¹ Paper Prepared in the Department of State NSAM 304 Action program for US Relations with East Europe, undated in FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XVII, Eastern Europe, doc. 12. [tjek note]

The administration's sense of being dismantled from Europe and – not least – the prospect of an untamed bilateralism in Western Europe would be on the agenda throughout the Johnson Presidency.

Germany and the German question figured prominently in the State Department's proposal to the Bridge Building policy. However, the department warned that the close cooperation with the Germans '*in the evolution of Western policies*' towards Eastern Europe should be carried out '*without permitting Bonn a veto*'.³⁰² The department believed that Germany was the key to evolution in Eastern Europe, and therefore to the American objectives in Eastern Europe. McGhee, the American ambassador to Germany, argued that for a true evolution in Eastern Europe, the legitimate security interests of these states had to be resolved,³⁰³ and, as would be increasingly highlighted during the 1960s, the historically based fears of German militarism, which especially Poland and Russia harbored, needed to be taken into account. McGhee, argued that Germany's potential to favorably impact on development in Eastern Europe was inhibited by the lack of a settlement of the border issue. Indeed if the Germans continued the present course it would be '*a drag on German reunification policy*' but also, for the American objectives in Eastern Europe. If '*implications that Germany aims at crippling Poland and Czechoslovakia*' could be harbored through the border issue, it would only tighten the Soviet grip in these states, and therefore provide a '*framework for continued Soviet predominance*'.³⁰⁴

Thus, according to McGhee, the expansion of German influence in the Eastern bloc, and the isolation of Ulbricht, i.e., a break up in Soviet hegemony founded on the historically based fear of Germany, was the '*only conceivable basis for unification*'.³⁰⁵ Moreover, the State Department's proposal to the Bridge Building policy added that Germany's peaceful intentions (towards Eastern Europe) were important for the envisioned '*understanding with East Europe in the field of arms control and disarmament*'.³⁰⁶ The Germans should (very carefully) be supported in '*any disposition shown ... to modify or by-pass the Hallstein Doctrine insofar as it served to impede the*

³⁰² Paper Prepared in the Department of State NSAM 304 Action program for US Relations with East Europe, undated in FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XVII, Eastern Europe, doc. 12.

³⁰³ The question of the German eastern borders was yet unresolved, and the Germans had insisted that Germany would not make any concessions nor fix the eastern border prior to a peace treaty. The US government supported that position. McGhee to Rusk, August 14, 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XV, Germany and Berlin, doc. 66.

³⁰⁴ McGhee to Rusk, August 14, 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XV, Germany and Berlin, doc. 66.

³⁰⁵ McGhee to Rusk, August 14, 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XV, Germany and Berlin, doc. 66.

³⁰⁶ Paper Prepared in the Department of State NSAM 304 Action program for US Relations with East Europe, undated in FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XVII, Eastern Europe, doc. 12.

development of Bonn's relations with East Europe'.³⁰⁷ The German instrument thus appeared quite important for the Johnson administration's bridge building policy.

Aftermath

Despite the State Department's substantial action program, it proved quite difficult to multilateralize and streamline Western Europe's policies. Germany was decisive for US aims in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and indeed, the Western European integration policy, and any developments in Germany had the potential to seriously damage US policy.

Thus, when a Gaullist turn was perceived on the verge in German politics in the fall 1964, the administration was concerned. A turn could have profound impact on both Western unity and the prospects for an East-West détente. As German nationalism was concerned more with *'parochial national interests, rather than collective European or Atlantic interests'*,³⁰⁸ it collided with the Atlantic orientation of the bridge building policy, the very bridge building policy, and the US policy of replacing (temporarily) the European integration structure with an Atlantic framework. Indeed, as Germany was a decisive piece in the overall Cold War puzzle, German nationalism collided with US policy towards the Soviet Union.

According to a September, 1964, memo on the right wing in German politics, Gaullism partly occurred as a response to both the very slow progress on the unity question and a too conciliatory policy towards the East. Therefore if the Atlanticists were to fight off the Gaullists, the Erhard leadership had to offer some convincing progress on *'at least one of the areas in which he is under Gaullist attack'*, namely German unity, MLF or European integration.³⁰⁹ As the MLF question was more than complicated, not least because the Johnson administration were vague and indecisive themselves, the unity question appeared the most promising area of policy where the Gaullists could be fended off, according to the memo, and it was also a key area for the bridge building policy. Although the German nationalists, such as Strauss, wanted to

³⁰⁷ Paper Prepared in the Department of State NSAM 304 Action program for US Relations with East Europe, undated in FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XVII, Eastern Europe, doc. 12.

³⁰⁸ Memo: The Right Wing in German Politics, Sep. 29, 1964, LBJL, NSF, Country Files, Germany, box 183.

³⁰⁹ Memo: The Right Wing in German Politics, Sep. 29, 1964, LBJL, NSF, Country Files, Germany, box 183; Rostow characterized the "mood of the Germans" as "sore beset and potentially dangerous" in a cover letter to Rusk. According to his report, this particular mood had come about as a consequence of correlating circumstances including the MLF question, and a perception of a US-Soviet rapprochement. See memo from Rostow to Tyler: Germany 1965, March 20, 1965 and cover letter from Rostow to Rusk, March 22, 1965, NARA, RG, Policy Planning Council (S/PC), Policy Planning Staff (S/P), Subject and Country Files, box 301

work *'closely with De Gaulle partly because of similarity of views, partly as a counter to US influence, and partly because they are confident that Germany can dominate a future united Europe built on a French-German core'* they were not 'anti-American' and were fully aware of Germany's dependence on 'U.S. power'.³¹⁰ Despite this somewhat optimistic notion, the German unity question kept entangling the US in German domestic politics throughout 1965.

De Gaulle's critique of the MLF further continued contest alliance cohesion according to the administration. De Gaulle, in general, argued that the MLF was an American construction designed to prevent Europe from obtaining an independent deterrent free from American control,³¹¹ and there was a substantial French opposition to the MLF scheme. De Gaulle was, however, not alone in his critical approach to the MLF, the British, who already had an independent nuclear force, were reluctant, although not dismissive of some sort of common NATO scheme. The Germans, or at least the Atlanticists including Erhard, were the only ones to support the MLF initiative. The Johnson staff was divided on the issue between the theologians and those who favored abandoning the hardware solution. In the late summer, 1964, however, the CIA reported if de Gaulle's *'indirect threats to take a stringent action against the EEC and NATO fail to block the MLF, he is probably prepared to end effect participation in both organizations'*.³¹² Later in the year, in December, Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State, reported to Johnson on Rusk's meeting with de Gaulle that de Gaulle 'strongly' expressed his hostility towards the MLF, and *'he says it will destroy NATO as we know it'*.³¹³ According to Bundy *'as this position is dinned into the Germans in the next two months, I think we can expect the sentiment for delay in Bonn to increase'*.³¹⁴ Thus, the prospects in December, 1964, were that de Gaulle could succeed with obstructing the MLF. Or as INR estimated: De Gaulle *'is probably not bluffing'* when he threatened with *'weakening'* or *'even to break up the common market and NATO'* if the MLF was implemented.³¹⁵

The 1964 bridge building policy was not a success.

Brief Conclusions

In 1963 and 1964 the Johnson administration recorded the beginnings of Western European realignments. De Gaulle was the prime perpetrator as

³¹⁰ Memo: The Right Wing in German Politics, Sep. 29, 1964, LBJL, NSF, Country Files, Germany, box 183.

³¹¹ CIA: DE Gaulle, Europe, and the MLF. Nov. 27, 1964. LBJL, NSF, Country files, France, box. 170.

³¹² CIA: DE Gaulle, Europe, and the MLF. Nov. 27, 1964. LBJL, NSF, Country files, France, box. 170.

³¹³ Bundy to Johnson, Dec. 15, 1964. LBJL, NSF, Country files, France, box. 170.

³¹⁴ Bundy to Johnson, Dec. 15, 1964. LBJL, NSF, Country files, France, box. 170.

³¹⁵ INR: Is de Gaulle Bluffing?, Dec. 17, 1964. LBJL, NSF, Country files, France, box. 170.

he challenged America's leadership of the alliance. De Gaulle denounced NATO's integration principle, which was an American invention designed to overcome the European power politics, he challenged the unilateralist position the US had in nuclear matters, he continued to 'obstruct' the Grand Design as he halted European integration, and he also moved to a détente with the Soviet Union. The contours of de Gaulle's political concepts of détente, alliances, and the organization of Europe as viable alternative to the status quo emerged. Indeed, other Western European states were recorded for sharing some of de Gaulle's ideas, and the administration fostered a fear for the spread of Gaullist ideas. Other European allies also realigned somewhat in the eyes of the administration. The increasing contact between Western and Eastern Europe, and the accompanying realization that the US lagged behind the European allies in their dealings with Eastern Europe challenged the American leadership of Western Europe. Despite Chancellor Erhard was a declared Atlanticist, the Johnson administration feared that the German Gaullists would gain in power.

The German question was entangled in the internal CDU struggle between Gaullism and Atlanticism, and the Johnson administration, though recognizing this domestic character, feared the impact the German question could have on US policy towards the Soviet Union – indeed, America's unilateralism in the dealings with the Soviet Union was threatened by the German question. Moreover, the administration faced a common Franco-German Gaullist critique of the American leadership in the Alliance.

The Johnson administration responded to the beginnings of the Western European realignment with the Bridge Building policy, which sought to temporarily replace the European integration scheme with an Atlantic framework to control the allies' policies, and streamline the allies' policies towards Eastern Europe. NATO was the primary instrument for the US in this endeavor, which was also to maintain a framework in which the US could maintain a certain level of unilateralism.

In general, the US interpreted de Gaulle's critique and based their fear of a Gaullist turn in German politics on a traditional reading of Europe's reason of state in the foreign policy realm. INR in particular, appeared to be captured by the idea that a lack of either an Atlantic or European integration structure would result in a return to European power politics. Rusk shared this line of thinking, when he estimated that de Gaulle's rejection of the integration principle would lead to a situation like the one prior to both world wars if the rest of the allies followed de Gaulle's example, which he believed was a possibility. The rejection of the European reason of state was indeed evident in the administration's perceptions of de Gaulle's and Western Europe's apparent and potential

return to power politics. In the same line of thinking, the administration's rejection of de Gaulle's demand that the European allies would get a finger on the nuclear trigger was an expression of the perceived need to maintain a certain unilateralism in America's relations with the European allies, in fact, to remain detached from the allies. The US had been forced forward by the largely realist interpretation of their relationship with the Soviet Union, however, the ultimate decision to engage in nuclear war was not entangled in the alliance.

Chapter 5 The French Challenge, 1964 - 1965

Introduction

In March, 1966, the French president de Gaulle withdrew France from NATO's integrated command and demanded that all foreign troops and military facilities not under French command leave French soil. The withdrawal did not catch the Johnson administration by surprise, rather before March, 1966, the administration had deliberated on French foreign policy and forecasted the French withdrawal. The prospects for NATO in the wake of the substantial critique from de Gaulle against NATO's principles and the NATO organization during 1964 and 1965, necessitated that the administration took a stand on exactly what purpose NATO served for America, the impact and possible consequences the French critique could have and did have on the alliance, and how to handle the French challenge. During 1964 and 1965, the amount of analysis of French foreign policy and the Gaullist impact on the alliance almost sky-rocketed, and results of analysis laid the groundwork for a 'new' formal position on NATO, with which the Johnson administration would meet the challenge from the European allies in the latter half of the 1960s towards NATO.

In general, the Johnson administration saw the French challenge to the existing order in Western Europe and the transatlantic relations as dangerous to the very same order in terms of the impact Gaullist ideas could have on German politics, the alliance, and therefore the US position in Western Europe. Gaullist ideas were, in the eyes of the administration, potentially very upsetting to the post-World War II order that the US laboriously had built around US unilateralism.

The administration believed that de Gaulle's criticism, calls for a reform of the alliance organization, and the potential withdrawal of France from the integrated command or even the alliance would pose a serious threat towards the alliance's very existence – at least in its current form, and this was largely seen as a threat to America's position in Europe.

During 1964-1965, the administration also gradually realized that Western Europe – and not just de Gaulle -- may not have the same strategic and political interests as the US, and that this divergence of interest posed a problem to the alliance, or at least the administration needed to address the issue.

In face of the challenge from de Gaulle and the possible spread of Gaullist ideas within the alliance, the administration came to believe that some sort of (further) political consultation within the alliance was

needed, either for appearance only or in substance, and the question of how to harmonize the political interests in the alliance emerged on the agenda. In August, 1965, the State Department's Bureau of Research and Intelligence (INR) suggested that the issue of political consultation within the alliance, in fact, was a matter of multilateralism and unilateralism; a choice between surrendering American freedom of action in foreign policy and thereby entangle US foreign policy with that of Western Europe, or choose a lack of political cohesiveness in the alliance for the sake of preserving US unilateralism. This was potentially a break with traditional thinking and therefore the very principles the Western European policy so far had been based on. However, the traditional thinking seemed to endure, and with that the protective unilateralism and a certain level of detachment.

America's Western European policy was a struggle between mainly two lines of thinking, namely multilateralism and unilateralism that was brought forwards exclusively by the Cold War paradigm.

Working around de Gaulle

De Gaulle's charges against the administration of having hegemonic behavior in the alliance and having an instrumental approach to Western Europe, did have an impact on the Western European policy thinking in the administration. Although with a limited principal scope, a small group within the State Department expressed doubts about the American policy towards Western Europe, and the means for the policy ends in particular. Indeed, in the fall 1964, it became clear that the administration probably had to come up with a plan to counter the spread of Gaullist inspired mistrust among the other European allies towards American intentions in Western Europe. In the spring 1965, the State Department requested a report on America's Western European policy, which the department believed needed a fresh look. This possible revisionist turn in America's Western European policy cannot exclusively be ascribed to de Gaulle. Although, the Gaullist criticism of the American preponderance of power was central to this revisionism, the administration in general believed that Gaullism was potentially harmful the moment it spread among the European allies, and therefore evolved the administration's response to de Gaulle around hindering the spread of Gaullism.

In the literature the Johnson administration's different responses or proposed responses to de Gaulle and his attacks on the US, the policy-making staff is divided between those who wanted to confront de Gaulle and those, among whom Johnson was, who wanted to avoid a direct and

public confrontation with de Gaulle.³¹⁶ The confrontationists are ascribed a somewhat revengeful objective driven by anger towards de Gaulle's largely, to the contemporary American eye, unfounded accusations. Bohlen, the American ambassador to France are among the confrontationists, however, Bohlen and other confrontationists mostly argued for the confrontation with de Gaulle to counter the spread of Gaullism. Much along the same lines as Rusk's tactics of intimidation, which he had proposed Secretary General Stikker in 1964, as touched upon in Chapter 4.

Indeed, in the fall of 1964, Bohlen commented on NATO Secretary General Brosio's estimate that de Gaulle would withdraw from NATO, to Tyler, the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs. Bohlen argued that Brosio's estimate was wrong and not really anything new; however, Bohlen also argued that the US should no longer '*remain quiescent in face of de Gaulle's gratuitous interpretation of American policy*'.³¹⁷ De Gaulle had repeated to Brosio that the US had lost interest in Europe, and would not come to Europe's defense if attacked by the Soviet Union. Bohlen, who also claimed it was a statement used for domestic purposes to justify the enormous spending on *Force de Frappe*, argued that the American policy of '*rolling with the punch*' towards de Gaulle might backfire, and de Gaulle's claims would spread '*to a number of countries in Europe*',³¹⁸ and that it would be quite easy to repudiate de Gaulle's claims. Bohlen's analysis highlights what would become increasingly more evident in American thinking, namely that de Gaulle if seen as an isolated 'incident' was harmless, however, the moment Gaullism connected to Western Europe or Germany it was potentially very harmful to America, and the reason for confronting de Gaulle was to hinder the spread of Gaullist ideas among the European allies. Tyler replied Bohlen, that he would discuss the matter with Rusk to work out a plan to counter this possible spread of mistrust in Europe towards American intentions.³¹⁹

De Gaulle's accusations of an American hegemony in the Western alliance, and his policy of reasserting France and Europe vis-à-vis the US led Tyler to question the validity and success of the administration's Western European integration policy, and even to suggest that de Gaulle's criticisms were perhaps self-inflicted.³²⁰ Tyler, who already had spoken about the 'confused sense' in Europe in March, 1964, as

³¹⁶ Schwartz (2003); Brands (1996).

³¹⁷ Bohlen to Tyler, Sep. 14, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 33.

³¹⁸ Bohlen to Tyler, Sep. 14, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 33.

³¹⁹ Note to doc. 33.

³²⁰ Tyler to Bruce, Sep. 19, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 35.

discussed in chapter 4, was ‘*more than ever convinced that we have made a very great mistake ... in trying to push Europe along one particular road in spite of the fact that the conditions for success in this venture was obviously not present, and that by exerting such pressures we were tending to justify the suspicion (exploited but not originated by de Gaulle) that what the United States is really after is an Atlantic framework within which Europe will be expected to play a predetermined part within predetermined limits only*’.³²¹ Tyler wrote in confidentiality and in response to Bruce, the American ambassador to London. Bruce had argued against pushing European integration, and argued for instead letting the Europeans work the halted integration process out for themselves, and from there create a sound Atlantic partnership.³²² Tyler, who did not object to the ‘broad lines and goals’ of the Western European policy; the Grand Design, objected mainly to ‘*the constant effort to give this policy a specific content in the immediate future by nagging and worrying and lecturing all and sundry in Europe or over here who we felt might be useful instruments for our purpose*’.³²³ This American push for European integration justified, according to Tyler, de Gaulle’s charge that American and Western European interests in Western organization were not the same, and that the US had a hegemonic posture in Western Europe.

As an alternative, Tyler argued that those Western Europeans who were as convinced as the US was, that principles of ‘interdependence and partnership’ was in Western Europe’s long term interest, would slowly move in that direction, and those who were not convinced, could be stimulated to move in that direction, however not by ‘nagging’ and forcing them. This however, demanded basic agreement in the administration, thus Tyler implied that the Western European policy was not necessarily based on common ground in the administration. This aspect would present itself even more clearly as de Gaulle’s overtures appeared to be materializing during 1965, when the State Department’s proposal for a policy, calling for the administration to work out a shared position with allies towards France in the military and defense questions to force the other European allies to take a stand on de Gaulle’s critique of NATO, never was endorsed by Johnson.

Tyler’s line of thinking was, however, a discussion of means and not ends. Tyler did not deviate from the traditional US thinking on the Western European-American relationship, namely the Grand Design. Tyler maintained that European integration and Atlantic partnership was in the American national interest, and indeed, that the US should

³²¹ Tyler to Bruce, Sep. 19, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 35.

³²² Tyler to Bruce, Sep. 19, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 35 and footnote 2.

³²³ Tyler to Bruce, Sep. 19, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 35.

promote this. As the Under Secretary put it, the US should '*recast the role of United States in European eyes and thus liberate and encourage renewed, and hopefully productive, efforts by Europeans to move in the direction of greater political unity*'.³²⁴ It is more strikingly though that even though Tyler recognized that the instrumental approach, which de Gaulle criticized the US for having towards Western Europe, was or could end up being shared by other European allies, Tyler did not stop to consider if this was in fact something the US should break away from. Instead Tyler discussed means, other than nagging and forcing, to direct Western Europe towards political unity upon which the Atlantic partnership could be based, in effect, Tyler discussed means to work around de Gaulle's accusations.

Working around de Gaulle would be the common coinage in the administration's policies towards de Gaulle as the latter half of 1960s progressed. Indeed Tyler argued '*that there have to be basic agreement and understanding within the executive branch of the government, not only in our goals, but on the nature of the approach required to promote them*'.³²⁵ Ambassador Bruce appears to have had the same errand as Tyler, to redress US means, when he claimed that '*the present temper in Washington is in favor of action for action's sake*' in the Western European policy.³²⁶

De Gaulle's challenge to the Grand Design was duly noted in the Department of State; however, the issue was how to work around de Gaulle. Tyler's line of thinking implied a somewhat Europeanist approach to the objectives of the Grand Design, namely less American 'nagging' and more Europe. Although the objectives for America's Western European policy remained the same, at least if Tyler's line of thinking was followed, de Gaulle had an emerging impact on America's policies, namely on one hand the traditional policies was revoked, and other the other hand, the means was possibly being reformulated.

MLF - America's *raison d'être*

The main purpose of the MLF was to contain Germany in the Western alliance by accommodating the German wishes for equality within the alliance, and at the same time taming German ambitions for a national nuclear force despite how distant the prospect may have seemed at the time. The Johnson administration subscribed to a sort of mythical perception of German militarism, which should be tamed, and at the same time the administration regarded Germany as the key nation in

³²⁴ Tyler to Bruce, Sep. 19, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 35.

³²⁵ Tyler to Bruce, Sep. 19, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 35.

³²⁶ Tyler to Bruce, Sep. 19, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 35 footnote 2.

Western Europe, and therefore the administration believed that close ties to Germany were essential for American interests. In sum, these considerations were at the heart of the American wish to accommodate German wishes for equality within the alliance also in the nuclear field.³²⁷ De Gaulle, who shared the American and Soviet opposition to a German finger on any nuclear trigger, saw the MLF as yet another American scheme to interfere in European matters, and accused the administration for hindering a European Europe, by subjecting Western European nuclear weapons to American veto.³²⁸ The American veto was (most likely) partly a result of a rejection of the European reason of state – and as such the US policy towards the nuclear field in the Alliance was a policy of detachment, as touched upon in Chapter 4.

De Gaulle's accusations against the MLF and the resonance of these accusations throughout the alliance forced the administration to take a stand on the MLF, but not the policy of detachment. The Johnson administration was also anxious to settle the matter because questions about nuclear weapons had the potential to upset Congress and possibly divert attention to issues, which inherently could cause a break with the bi-partisan Western European policy. Indeed, the Vietnam War, which LBJ and an almost unanimous Congress escalated with the Tonkin Gulf Resolution in August, 1964, and Johnson's Great Society reforms were dependent on this bipartisanship in America's foreign policy.³²⁹

The MLF was also about nuclear non-proliferation in broader terms, and the MLF scheme was a way to hinder the spread of national nuclear deterrence. The Johnson administration pursued a non-proliferation treaty with the Soviet Union to continue Kennedy's *petite détente*, and the Chinese testing of a nuclear bomb in October, 1964, further underlined the world's 'forces for proliferation' and therefore the more urgent need for a non-proliferation treaty.³³⁰ The administration did not however, believe that the US could conclude any formal agreements with the Soviet Union in 1964-1965. The Sino-Soviet rift was, as put forward in chapter 4, seen as a hindrance for any formal agreements, and Brezhnev was seen as moving further away from the US and a US-USSR *détente*. Moreover, the *petite détente* of 1964 was sharply interrupted when US forces bombed North Vietnam while the Soviet foreign minister Kosygin was in Hanoi.³³¹ Only in October, 1966, did the administration detect a shift the Soviet position on formal agreements,

³²⁷ For more on the mythical perception of German militarism see Costigliola (1994), pp. 173-175.

³²⁸ Bohlen to State, Jan. 5, 1965. NARA, RG 59, POL 1 FR, box 2168.

³²⁹ Brands (1996), pp. 27-28 and 260-263.

³³⁰ Memcon, Oct. 31, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 44.

³³¹ Dumbrell (2004), p. 40

and in 1967, the negotiations on the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) took shape.

The MLF Problem

In November and December, 1964, the MLF developed into a pressing issue as de Gaulle's accusations became even fiercer as he threatened to obstruct the MLF and break up NATO.³³² Moreover, de Gaulle's charges against the MLF had a potential impact on Germany. Although the MLF had been a means to strengthen the Atlantic framework in the wake of the 1963 crisis between de Gaulle and the Kennedy administration,³³³ and the Johnson administration displayed confusion and disagreements, Johnson and the rest of the administration decided to let the MLF sink out of sight in December, 1964. Subsequently the administration took a stand on the entire nuclear question in relation to Western Europe. The administration's 'new' nuclear position, which revealed the administration's traditional thinking on Western European policy, was old wine on new bottles, namely to disarm the European allies, although within a context of a greater non-proliferation scheme.

In November, 1964, Bundy recorded the diverging opinions on the matter among the senior advisors. According to Bundy of the White House, Rusk, McNamara, and Ball the Undersecretary of State all agreed that the MLF was '*the least unsatisfactory means of keeping the Germans well tied into the alliance, but we see it as a means, and not an end in itself*'.³³⁴ However, behind that basic agreement, there were divergences. Rusk shared the confrontationist approach to de Gaulle with Bohlen, and believed that in the light of the 'outrageous' French behavior, the administration should publicly counter the French accusations against the alliance and the MLF to counter the spread of Gaullist ideas. However, Bundy and McNamara, according to Bundy, thought it wiser '*to be more polite and more forthcoming than the French deserve ... in order to weaken their claim that we are deliberately encircling them and trying to prevent a European Europe*'.³³⁵ Bundy much along the same lines as Tyler and Bruce before him, did not stop to consider the validity of de Gaulle's accusations against the MLF concept of being an American construct designed to maintain the American position in Western Europe as opposed to the creation of a European Europe with a nuclear capability. Bundy only considered the means to counter these claims and to work around de Gaulle, without losing the Germans and

³³² See chapter 4 Aftermath.

³³³ Lundestad (2003), p. 126-127; Hanhimäki et al. (2010), p. 68-72.

³³⁴ Memo Bundy to Johnson, Nov. 8, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 46.

³³⁵ Memo Bundy to Johnson, Nov. 8, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 46.

the British, as the MLF question was also still about the British. Although the US had succeeded in 1962 with the Nassau agreement to 'encircle' the British nuclear deterrent somewhat, the UK still had a national nuclear deterrent, which the US still wished to bring under control via an American led nuclear scheme. Although the British Prime Minister Harold Wilson (Labour) was not a Gaullist, he was an Atlanticist and struggled with maintaining the special relationship to the US, at least according to the State Department's analysis, Wilson was skeptical about the MLF and under pressure from the Tories led by Macmillan, who shared some of de Gaulle's views.

Bundy suggested different means in November, 1964, to keep both the British and the Germans interested and entangled in the concept despite de Gaulle's accusations; means which evolved around convincing them both of their common interest, and thereby counter the Gaullist scheme.³³⁶ The problem the administration faced with Germany was that de Gaulle's attacks on the MLF had provided the Gaullist wing in the government coalition CDU/CSU sufficiently ammunition to make a quiet solution to the MLF problem more urgent. A direct confrontation with the French on the MLF would give the Gaullist wing in the CDU/CSU better odds at outmaneuvering the Atlanticist Chancellor Erhard at the upcoming German elections.³³⁷ Thus, Germany was potentially lost to the Gaullist wing in CDU/CSU on the issue, and the very purpose with the MLF, namely to contain Germany and promote Western European integration would suffer a severe setback.³³⁸

Congress, which had been kept in the dark for some time, was approached by Rusk and Bundy, and the question of retaining American unilateralism in the form of control and veto rights over nuclear weapons proved to be the key to have the MLF approved in Congress.³³⁹ Accordingly Congress was quite reluctant of any amendment of the McMahon Act, which had established US control over the nuclear weapons technology. Furthermore, Congress would find it difficult to pass the MLF if it was not something that would both strengthen unity in the alliance and also was something the allies wanted. This reflected the traditional Congressional opposition to interference in Western European political affairs.

³³⁶ Memo Bundy to Johnson, Nov. 8, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 46.

³³⁷ Ball to Rusk, Nov. 17, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 49.

³³⁸ The French did not want to share their nuclear weapons with the Germans, but merely extend a nuclear guarantee. It appears that de Gaulle kept pushing this potentially explosive issue between France and Germany in front of him in these years.

³³⁹ Draft memcon, Nov. 19, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 50; Memo Bundy to Johnson, Dec. 6, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 57.

In the late November, 1964, insecurity about the wisdom of the MLF spread in the administration, and Johnson issued NSAM 318 stating that within the next months, a decision on the nuclear defense of the alliance was necessary. The decision, which Johnson contemplated, did not only relate to the MLF but also the 'concerns' of the Wilson government. Johnson also stated that the primary interest for the US in the matter of nuclear defense of the alliance was to find a solution, which would advance Atlantic partnership and nonproliferation.³⁴⁰

Johnson and Bundy both doubted the wisdom of the MLF. Bundy, the White House National Security Advisor, wrote Ball, Under Secretary of State, that the administration now '*should let the MLF sink out of sight*',³⁴¹ because the political cost of MLF success was too high. Bundy listed the political costs, among which, were a '*deeply reluctant and essentially unpersuaded Great Britain*'³⁴², a success would spark a constitutional debate about the organization of NATO, it would invite more attacks from de Gaulle against NATO organization, and it would deliver a blow to the Franco-German alliance '*which the Germans will blame on us*'.³⁴³ The latter obviously going against Western European unity, which had been the primary reason among the theologians to further the MLF, thus de Gaulle's opposition to the MLF was, in fact, considered strong enough to disrupt Western European unity. However, the most important thing, namely to keep Germany tied into the Western alliance was achievable without the MLF, according to Bundy, because '*as long as the German Chancellor is treated with care and dignity by the American President, I believe we can meet the main purposes of the MLF, at least in the short run*'.³⁴⁴

Bundy argued for the high political cost of the MLF in his response to Johnson's inquiry about Kennedy's tentative position towards the MLF.³⁴⁵ Bundy argued that the devil's advocate would state two choices. One was the '*full steam ahead*' with which Johnson would face a '*long, hard political fight, a major confrontation with de Gaulle, and a possibility of defeat or delay which would gravely damage the prestige of the President*'.³⁴⁶ The other choice being '*half steam ahead*' and although there would '*probably be no MLF*' it would not be blamed entirely on the president. Johnson would

³⁴⁰ NSAM 318 Nov. 14, 1964. LBJL

<http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/nsams/nsam318.asp>

³⁴¹ Bundy to Ball, Nov. 25, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 52.

³⁴² Bundy to Ball, Nov. 25, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 52.

³⁴³ Bundy to Ball, Nov. 25, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 52.

³⁴⁴ Bundy to Ball, Nov. 25, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 52.

³⁴⁵ Bundy to Johnson, Dec. 6, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 57.

³⁴⁶ Bundy to Johnson, Dec. 6, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 57.

rather *'have kept the letter and spirit of the Kennedy readiness to move if the Europeans wanted it'*.³⁴⁷

Bundy concluded that with the latter choice *'there would be plenty of opportunities for debate, discussion and delay, and for gradual and ceremonial burial. Your wisdom, caution and good judgment will have the praise of the liberals, of military men, of the British, of the French, and of many Germans – and you will have the freedom to make a different choice later if you wish'*.³⁴⁸ The irony aside, Bundy's suggested prospects with the half steam ahead method also reflected the administration's preoccupation with an un-dramatic end to the MLF. Naturally the Great Society reforms and the war in Vietnam,³⁴⁹ had an impact on the administration's Western European policies to the extent that unrest in the Western alliance could divert domestic public and Congressional attention from these prioritized matters, but the call for less drama was mostly to counter the spread of Gaullism. Any public quarrel would highlight de Gaulle's alternative to the current state of affairs between the US and the European allies.

The administration's line of thinking on the MLF question in 1964-1965 was more about maintaining the US position in Western Europe and the existing order, against which national nuclear weapons and de Gaulle was a grave danger than the actual desirability of a multilateral nuclear scheme within the alliance. The administration's decision to abolish the Multilateral Force was a choice of necessity for the Johnson administration. Indeed, the British reluctance to surrender their national nuclear deterrent, de Gaulle's attack on American hegemony, and the prospects of opening for both a Gaullist takeover in Germany and a debate about NATO's constitution made the abolishment preferable especially as there were other means to contain Germany. The MLF debacle of 1964 was essentially a first token of Western European realignments, which forced the Johnson administration on the defensive. Moreover, the MLF was also a precursor for what was ahead of the Johnson administration with the alliance organization.

Although there is no doubt that the administration had come to believe that the MLF was a non-starter by December, 1964, the administration sought to place the responsibility for the MLF's failure on the Europeans,³⁵⁰ the administration reasoned that the possible turmoil within the alliance if the US pulled back from the MLF would give further grounds to Gaullist attacks or even make Gaullist accusations true. Thus, although the British tabled a proposal for an Atlantic Nuclear

³⁴⁷ Bundy to Johnson, Dec. 6, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 57.

³⁴⁸ Bundy to Johnson, Dec. 6, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 57.

³⁴⁹ Brands ...

³⁵⁰ Schwarts (2003).

Force (ANF), which was exactly what the administration had wanted prior to the December decision, Johnson made it clear at his meeting with Wilson, the British Prime Minister, that he did not want to push the British into making these decisions.³⁵¹ In the end the MLF proposal was officially taken off the table referring to the fact that nobody really wanted it.³⁵²

Two weeks after Bundy's 'devil's advocate' response, Johnson issued NSAM 322 '*Guidelines for Discussions on the Nuclear Defense of the Atlantic Alliance*', in which he directed that no government officials should seek a binding agreement '*at this time*' and restated that the administration faced important decisions and discussions with the allies on the matter. Johnson also repeated that any agreement should be supportive of nonproliferation.³⁵³ Johnson argued, much in line with Tyler's 'Europeanist' thinking that '*the US is not seeking to force its own views on any European nation, but wishes rather to find a way of responding effectively to the largest possible consensus among interested allies*'.³⁵⁴ Johnson furthermore directed how the staff should continue to urge a British-German agreement on the issue of nuclear defense of the alliance, and avoid public quarrels with de Gaulle.

However, the NSAM also outlined the official US position on the US nuclear veto and the so-called European clause. The European clause envisioned that Europe not be barred from having and obtaining an independent nuclear force in the future. Johnson stated in the NSAM that the American veto on the firing of the weapons was a precondition for the establishment of a collective nuclear arrangement, and in the event the '*major nations of Europe some day achieve full political unity with a central political authority capable of making decision to use nuclear weapons*'³⁵⁵ the US recognized that this would amount to a new situation 'in which reconsideration' of the nuclear arrangement would be called for. However, the US still refused to commit to a revision even in that situation, indeed, '*in any event, revision of the charter [on nuclear defense of the alliance] would be possible only with the unanimous approval of the members*'.³⁵⁶

Following that line of thinking, it is hardly surprising that the administration's 'new' position on nuclear defense in the alliance advanced certain principles, which would establish the US as the sole nuclear power, and maintain structures that would maintain and advance

³⁵¹ Memcon, Dec. 7, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 58; de folgende

³⁵² Brands (199).

³⁵³ NSAM 322, Dec. 17, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 65.

³⁵⁴ NSAM 322, Dec. 17, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 65.

³⁵⁵ NSAM 322, Dec. 17, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region

³⁵⁶ NSAM 322, Dec. 17, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region

this status. Indeed ‘any agreement’ should advance the disarmament of Western Europe, hinder the Western European states from obtaining national nuclear deterrents, and most important maintain the principle of collective security, in which the US would maintain the nuclear veto. Indeed, the UK should be led ‘*out of the strategic deterrence and thus reduce by one the number of powers aiming at this kind of nuclear strength*’,³⁵⁷ the Germans should be contained to the extent that they would not seek an independent nuclear deterrence, and lastly an agreement on the nuclear question should ‘*advance the principle and practice of collective strategic defense, as against the proliferation of separate nuclear deterrents*’ Indeed, these ‘*advantages are of great importance ... to all who care for world peace in other countries, and it is essential that they be established in any agreement.*’³⁵⁸

An agreement on the nuclear defense of the alliance based on these principles reflected a traditional reading of Western Europe and a rejection of the European reason of state. Apparently, if West Germany or any other Western European state were granted the right to national nuclear weapons, it followed that they would be used in the context of narrow national interest outside the framework of the collective security. The granting of a national deterrent invoked the rejection of European reason of state in the American thinking so to speak. The independent nuclear deterrence in Western Europe would inevitably mean that the US had lost control over the policy of deterrence via NATO, and therefore national nuclear deterrents in Western Europe also meant, that the US could be drawn into European (nuclear based) politics, which was inimical to US interests. This would make the policy outlined in NSAM 322 an actual policy of detachment from the alliance, and not just a standpoint of detachment.

On the other hand the idea of nonproliferation and nuclear disarming could be seen as a reflecting a certain simple logic that lesser national nuclear weapons, lesser risk of nuclear war – in essence an idealist line of thinking. The point however is that neither of these lines of thinking excludes one another. The wish to prevent the proliferation of these weapons was also about the overall East-West conflict, and also reflects the strategic shift to flexible response that the Johnson administration attempted in NATO.

Franco-Soviet Rapprochement

The Franco-Soviet rapprochement in the spring 1965 did not disturb the administration much, mostly because de Gaulle’s efforts were limited by the lack of substantial backing from the Western European allies,

³⁵⁷ NSAM 322, Dec. 17, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 65.

Germany in particular. Thus, according to the administration, de Gaulle risked jeopardizing his position in Western Europe. The administration also believed that although the Franco-Soviet Communiqué issued in April, 1965, after Soviet Premier Gromyko's visit to Paris, did not change the situation much, the Communiqué put the French *'in bed with the Soviet Union in a number of important issues, which are calculated to create discomfort in several places including Washington, London, and Bonn'*.³⁵⁹ Thus, the French effort towards the Soviet Union was mostly, as seen from Washington, a devised to be a challenge to the France's allies.

The only diverting voice on the matter was Bohlen, the ambassador to France, who also consistently argued for a confrontation with de Gaulle on his critique of the alliance and claims about American foreign policy to stop the spread of Gaullist ideas. Prior to the Soviet visit in Paris Bohlen characterized de Gaulle's statement on France and the Soviet Union having agreed to establish an international conference to seek peace in Vietnam, as *'objectively, de Gaulle's statement appears to violate spirit of NATO and certainly of SEATO'*.³⁶⁰ Moreover, in effect de Gaulle had decided, according to Bohlen, upon a new diplomatic course with the Soviet Union to put pressure on the US *'into action which runs counter to US and Western positions'*, indeed, de Gaulle had effectively *'departed from the community of Western interest'*.³⁶¹ In response, Bohlen suggested either a high level public statement against France or a formal note to the French government, either way was rejected by Klein, member of the White House NSC staff, who argued that a public statement would be counterproductive and that instead, if anything, the administration should discretely contact the French foreign minister Couve de Murville.³⁶² However, Klein thought that the *'French shenanigans vis-à-vis the Soviets in connection with the Asian problem and the impact of the alliance'* was worth Bundy's time.³⁶³

Shortly before Gromyko's visit to Paris in April, Bohlen touched upon the Vietnam issue once again. This time though, the prospects for an actual Franco-Soviet concord and viable solution were deemed unrealistic. Indeed, the possibilities within reach of both Paris and Moscow during the visit were limited, as both parties were restricted by their respective 'rears'. The Soviet Union risked by subscribing to Gaullist ideas on Europe to lose its position in Eastern Europe, whereas de Gaulle with too warm relations with the Kremlin probably would lose the position he enjoyed in Western Germany and the EEC. However,

³⁵⁹ Klein to Bundy, April 29, 1965.

³⁶⁰ Bohlen to Secstate, March 1, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁶¹ Bohlen to Secstate, March 1, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁶² Klein to Bundy, March 2, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁶³ Klein to Bundy Mar. 2, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

Bohlen, suspicious as always, argued that the US could never be sure if de Gaulle did not give something of importance to the Kremlin.³⁶⁴

Bohlen then went on to argue that European security and Germany would be on the agenda of the upcoming meeting, and although de Gaulle would not jettison his position in German quarters, he would probably agree to a statement to the effect that European security and German reunification was exclusively a European matter, rather than a matter '*primarily also affecting the US and the UK*'.³⁶⁵ Although this would be a departure from the official French position that German unification was a '*quadripartite responsibility*'.³⁶⁶ Thus, what seemed most dangerous about the French-Soviet rapprochement was the potentiality rather than reality.

CIA's estimate of the French dialogue with the Soviets, that reached Bundy at the White House, argued that de Gaulle would probably not go out on a limp with Soviets; only if his 'Paris-Bonn axis' failed to emerge de Gaulle would consider an alliance with the Soviet Union.³⁶⁷ However, the emerging détente between the two parties served a primary goal of ensuring that Moscow and Washington would not attempt a settlement of the German problem without European concurrence, and in the long run, de Gaulle probably hoped for '*eventual negotiations on European questions between French-led Western Europe and the communist countries in Eastern Europe*'.³⁶⁸ These hardly sensational estimates were topped with the estimate that '*De Gaulle has no desire to have US abandon its role as the guarantor of Europe's security. The American 'nuclear umbrella' over Europe is the sine qua non for achievement of De Gaulle's policies.*'³⁶⁹ The State Department would concur in this estimate however; they argued that the French did not really have a problem in that regard, because the French geographic position would guarantee that France was covered by the nuclear umbrella in case of a Soviet attack.

Moreover, according to the CIA, the Soviet Union also considered the US presence in Europe as '*a valuable check on the present and potential resurgence of West German power*'.³⁷⁰ The latter perspective, however, runs counter to the Soviet perception that the US was about to give the Germans a finger on the nuclear trigger with the MLF. The CIA's estimate was thus hardly alarming, unless to the extent that (if) the French-German axis failed.

³⁶⁴ Bohlen to SecState, Apr. 24, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁶⁵ Bohlen to SecState, Apr. 24, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁶⁶ Bohlen to SecState, Apr. 24, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁶⁷ CIA: France's Dialogue with France, May 21, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁶⁸ CIA: France's Dialogue with France, May 21, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁶⁹ CIA: France's Dialogue with France, May 21, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁷⁰ CIA: France's Dialogue with France, May 21, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

NATO and de Gaulle

De Gaulle's criticism of the alliance and the integrated structure, which Rusk had characterized as the very heart of the alliance in 1964,³⁷¹ escalated in the spring 1965, and the administration got increasingly occupied with understanding and subsequent estimating de Gaulle's next moves and the impact de Gaulle had on the alliance and the rest of the allies. The administration had different opinions on de Gaulle's critique of the alliance and the integrated structure, and as 1965 proceeded the matter of alliance organization, alliance principles, and the very purpose with the alliance reached a principal level in the Johnson administration.

INR argued in May, 1965, that de Gaulle's objective, in fact, was not *'so much to actually destroy the basic alliance ... or even the NATO superstructure'*,³⁷² but rather de Gaulle tried to leverage on both the US and Western Europe to obtain French policy ends.³⁷³ The alliance, Hughes, the director of INR, argued, served French policy ends beyond the military protection (which de Gaulle believed France enjoyed despite the existence of the alliance or even membership) to French political ends. As Hughes had argued in 1964, a diminishing Soviet threat would also diminish the need for the alliance in de Gaulle's perspective, however, Hughes added this political dimension in 1965, and argued that de Gaulle attacked the alliance and would continue to 'dis-integrate' France from the alliance to force a reform of *'the intra-Alliance and Franco-US relationships'*, however, de Gaulle would not want to restrain the Franco-German relationship, nor France's relations with the other European allies.³⁷⁴ Thus by May, 1965, the administration at least within the State Department was no longer in doubt as to whether de Gaulle wanted a reform of the alliance, as Rusk had questioned in 1964.³⁷⁵

The Principal Considerations the purpose of the Alliance

In the spring of 1965, Hughes argued that de Gaulle, in fact, had failed utterly in Europe among the allies to build a French led Europe. Instead de Gaulle had obtained the opposite. Hughes argued that by "killing off" the early political integration between the six and trying to establish an *'open French hegemony'* de Gaulle had given the Western European partners *'new reason to welcome a political framework which gives them, under the aegis of the United States, protection from French hegemony today, and from Franco-German or German hegemony tomorrow'*.³⁷⁶ Therefore, added Hughes, *'in this sense it is accurate to say that if NATO did not exist, it would be necessary to invent it. That*

³⁷¹ Chapter 4.

³⁷² INR to Rusk, May 4, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁷³ INR to Rusk, May 4, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁷⁴ INR to Rusk, May 4, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁷⁵ See chapter 5.

³⁷⁶ INR to Rusk, May 4, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

is, even if the Alliance did not serve Western defense needs its members would still value it for intra-Western political purposes',³⁷⁷ indeed; the alliance 'filled the bill' since no state in Western Europe could dominate. The alliance, according to Hughes 'guarantee a continued US military – an therefore political – presence in Europe',³⁷⁸ and 'more European governments will continue to prefer that the US preside over an Atlantic political system rather than the leadership over the European half of a two-pillar system accrue to any one or two European states.'³⁷⁹

This understanding of the alliance, its purpose, and the means to this end hardly differed from the post-war thinking on the alliance, in fact, the French 'obstructionism', as it was labeled in the State Department, revived the reasoning and the purpose of the alliance of the late 1940s. Indeed, in 1945-1948 the presence of the US in Western Europe through the establishment of an Atlantic system guaranteed peaceful relations on the continent, which would be endangered by European power struggles. Moreover the idea that the US would have a political role in Western Europe through the military 'presence' was also very much like the thinking of the late 1940s, when the US had come to consider itself as a European power. INR, probably because of this traditional reading, failed to recognize that de Gaulle's critique of the American hegemony in the alliance, in fact, had resonance throughout Western Europe, and that de Gaulle's objective was not as simplistic as INR made it out to be. De Gaulle's political project was more sophisticated than INR's 'classic' euro-skeptic analysis amounted to, indeed, de Gaulle's Cold War revisionism aimed at overcoming the Cold War in Europe and not establish a pre-war system in the process.³⁸⁰

In the same traditional line of thinking the Department of Defense (DoD) argued in a 'non-paper' sent to Francis Bator, Deputy Special Assistant to Johnson, in the fall, that apart from controlling German rearmament and direct German forces to the benefit of the West, the principle of '*Integration ... serves the fundamental purpose of furthering the US and Allied foreign policy through the mechanism of the North Atlantic Alliance, providing a degree of unity of political attitude and policy in the Atlantic area not otherwise obtainable.*'³⁸¹ The central issue in the wake of de Gaulle's continued critique of the integration principle was therefore '*whether there shall be a collective multilateral system between equal sovereign states employing integration as needed in the interest of effectiveness, or a system of bilateral power politics involving all the dangers of the turn of the 20th century.*'³⁸² Should the US

³⁷⁷ INR to Rusk, May 4, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁷⁸ INR to Rusk, May 4, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁷⁹ INR to Rusk, May 4, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

³⁸⁰ Bozo (2010) ppp

³⁸¹ DoD: "French intentions", sep. 25, 1965. LBJL, papers of Francis Bator, subject file, box 26.

³⁸² DoD: "French intentions", sep. 25, 1965. LBJL, papers of Francis Bator, subject file, box 26.

reject the European reason of state in the foreign policy realm, which de Gaulle's concept according to this line of thinking was the exponent of, or not? DoD opted for a continued rejection. Thus, by the fall of 1965, it was a common position throughout the administration to regard the possible impact of de Gaulle as a return to European power politics through the rejection of the integration principle which moreover equaled a loss of American leadership in the alliance. Therefore, as DoD argued, the administration had to prevent that de Gaulle became '*the lowest common denominator*'.³⁸³ The problem was, therefore, how the administration could prevent (the possibility of) a return to European power politics. Or, in other words, how a renewed rejection of the European reason of state should be framed.

The Department of Defense rejected pre-emptive and retaliatory approaches, and argued that the administration instead should, essentially, maintain and retain the allies, and '*a sense of direction and timing as to when leadership will be followed is a sine qua non both for the US and others. It is important to extend the practices and procedures of political consultation, to improve measurably the exchange of information and analysis in the defense field ... and most importantly, to continue to work for nuclear sharing arrangements. Progress on such of these fronts which do not involve basic structural reform in NATO and which are thus least subject to French veto, will make NATO far less susceptible to de Gaulle's abrasions and increase its values for its members [underlining by Bator]*'.³⁸⁴ Therefore, DoD concluded, the US was prepared '*to explore and bring to light*'³⁸⁵ how NATO could be improved and made stronger, although exclusively in action with the allies. The snag was not to push the effort too far into the structural area, which would give de Gaulle the opportunity to obstruct the alliance even further,³⁸⁶ an obstruction, which could result in the implementation of the '*lowest common denominator*' and possibly a return to power politics in Europe.

McNamara, to counter the nuclear problem and extend the political consultation without moving into the area of structural reform of the alliance, had already suggested at the May, 1965, NATO Ministerial meeting the establishment of the so-called Select Committee of Defense Ministers (SC) under NATO aegis. The Select Committee should study two principal items, namely '*examination of possible means of improving and*

³⁸³ DoD: "French intentions", sep. 25, 1965. LBJL, papers of Francis Bator, subject file, box 26.

³⁸⁴ DoD: "French intentions", sep. 25, 1965. LBJL, papers of Francis Bator, subject file, box 26.

³⁸⁵ DoD: "French intentions", sep. 25, 1965. LBJL, papers of Francis Bator, subject file, box 26.

³⁸⁶ much in line with Bundy's line of thinking, when he recommended that the administration letting the MLF sink out of sight

*extending Allied participation in planning for use of nuclear force*³⁸⁷ and work out means for communications so that in ‘*event of crisis in which use of nuclear weapons may be contemplated*’.³⁸⁸ The Select Committee would eventually propose the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG), which the administration palmed the Western Europeans off with instead of the MLF in December, 1966, after the French withdrawal from NATO’s integrated command. The NPG’s permanent members were the US, West Germany, Italy and Great Britain, and only members of the integrated command structure could become members of the NPG, thus reflecting how the SC was intended and constructed to maintain and retain the integrated command structure, with which the US could maintain control with the alliance.

Moreover, the SC also reflected that although McNamara had ensured at the ministerial meeting in Paris that the SC was not a substitution for the MLF but ‘additional’, the MLF was still considered a non-starter by the administration. The SC was one of the administration’s direct responses to de Gaulle’s obstructionism without moving the question of the alliance into any ‘structural’ area, but merely working around de Gaulle. The Select Committee was finally appointed in November, 1965.³⁸⁹

The Department of State disagreed with the Department of Defense, and did not completely reject a structural reform of NATO, in fact, Rusk and Ball had already argued during the May, 1965, NATO Ministerial Meeting that there was a need for an ‘*intensive study of the State of the Alliance*’³⁹⁰ given de Gaulle’s overtures, and Rusk declared in the light of de Gaulle’s probable alliance reorganization proposal that although the Department of State did not want to ‘*push far-reaching over-hasty fundamental discussions*’³⁹¹ the department wished to begin preparations ‘*where possible [my underlining]*’.³⁹² Later in the same month Rusk believed that French foreign minister Alphand at their meeting had indicated that de Gaulle pushed his time schedule for a ‘*revision of NATO*’,³⁹³ and in June, 1965, Rusk informed all NATO capitals that de Gaulle intended ‘*to ask US in effect to vacate certain military facilities in*

³⁸⁷ Rusk to NATO, June 2, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 87.

³⁸⁸ Rusk to NATO, June 2, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 87.

³⁸⁹ Cleveland to State, Nov. 28., 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 113.

³⁹⁰ Rusk to State, May 14, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 85.

³⁹¹ Rusk to State, May 14, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 85.

³⁹² Rusk to State, May 14, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 85.

³⁹³ Rusk to Emb. France, May 21, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc.86

France'.³⁹⁴ Rusk argued that this particular move, even though it may be postponed until after the upcoming French elections in December, 1965, was in complete line with 'emerging' policies in Paris '*to disengage France from NATO organization and specifically from integrated NATO military activities*'.³⁹⁵ Furthermore, Rusk warned that any 'premature' response to any French moves could potentially 'permit' France to claim that the US had excluded France from NATO, and '*thus to break up the alliance*', and any US premature reaction would '*also prevent us from engaging in essential systematic and intensive consultation with our allies to ensure that the Alliance responds effectively to any French political attack, and emerges without unnecessary loss of strength*'.³⁹⁶

Thus, during 1965 de Gaulle's challenge to NATO and American hegemony had split the administration on a rather fundamental question, namely if the alliance should respond to the Gaullist challenge with a reform of NATO in the structural area. Whereas the Department of Defense argued against, Rusk the Secretary of State out of necessity opted for a reform. Indeed, de Gaulle's policy of disengaging France from the integrated structure obstructed (potentially) an instrument for America to lead the alliance. The State Department and the White House undertook studies on how to respond to the French political and military challenge

The Purposes of the Alliance

Although the nuclear sharing question was somewhat safely buried with the establishment of the Select Committee (and the Paris Working Group), the French problem continued its pace, and raised essential questions in Washington about the purpose of the alliance and exactly how to respond to the contemplated French withdrawal from the integrated structure of the alliance. In the fall of 1965, the administration went through '*intensive planning*' with '*major aspects of European policy*'.³⁹⁷ Although de Gaulle forced the Johnson administration to a Western European policy revision, the other European allies were also causing the

³⁹⁴ Rusk to Emb. France, May 21, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc.86; Rusk to NATO, June 10, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 89.

³⁹⁵ Rusk to NATO, June 10, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 89.

³⁹⁶ Rusk to NATO, June 10, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 89.

³⁹⁷ Leddy to Bator, sep. 17, 1965. LBJL, NSF, Bator Papers, box 26, Leddy to Rusk, Nov. 8, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 108; Cleveland to Rusk, Nov. 16, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 110; Rusk to Certain posts, July 15, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 98; Memcon, July 6, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. Xiii, Western Europe Region, doc. 93..

administration reason to undertake this revision. In Western Europe the perception of a lessening of the Soviet threat prevailed, and there were an increasing economic and cultural activity across the iron curtain between Eastern and Western Europe. These new circumstances in Western Europe challenged alliance cohesion according to the administration, and the question about how to maintain this cohesion was central for the revision of the policy towards the European allies.

Hughes and INR tried to answer some of these essential questions about the purpose of the alliance in August, 1965; in essence Hughes argued that the alliance served a triple purpose for the US.

The primary purpose was to regulate Western Europe's policies. According to INR's analysis was '*West Europe ... not only economically and politically strong but considers that the threat of Soviet attack has been replaced by a US-USSR nuclear stalemate. NATO has therefore become to a considerable degree, in fact, though not in form and bureaucratic outlook, an instrumentality for regulating political issues within the West*'³⁹⁸ and therefore NATO remained '*essential to the US as a well established and easily available instrument for exercising American political influence in Europe*'.³⁹⁹ Indeed, de Gaulle had made it quite easy to exercise power in Western Europe – and Western Europe welcomed this, as Hughes repeated his observation from the spring, that Western Europe in the wake of de Gaulle's behavior and policies considered NATO '*the established modality through which America can easily and almost painlessly make its power operative and in preserving West European stability*'.⁴⁰⁰

The second purpose was to geographically expand the area for coordination of the alliance members' policies beyond Europe. Hughes argued that NATO remained essential to the US because it served the broader purpose of '*harmonize the many divergent U.S. and West European political and economic interests both in Europe and on a worldwide basis*'.⁴⁰¹ NATO's instrumentality for US policies towards the so-called out of treaty areas was an emerging subject within the administration, and would during the course of 1965 and 1966 gain in strength as the European allies failed to support the America war effort in Vietnam, and in fact failed to support the domino theory. Indeed, the Johnson administration supported and mandated the Harmel study in December, 1966, because it also served to study the out of treaty area question.

NATO's third purpose, as Hughes analysis reveal, was as an instrument to regulate the relations between Eastern and Western

³⁹⁸ INR: The Significance of NATO – Present and Future, Aug. 3, 1965, LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

³⁹⁹ INR: The Significance of NATO – Present and Future, Aug. 3, 1965, LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

⁴⁰⁰ INR: The Significance of NATO – Present and Future, Aug. 3, 1965, LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

⁴⁰¹ INR: The Significance of NATO – Present and Future, Aug. 3, 1965, LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

Europe with the ultimate purpose of avoiding conflict between Eastern and Western Europe, to ensure and safeguard US commercial and political interests in Western Europe, and ‘*safeguard its [The US’s] position of great influence in the area [Western Europe]*’.⁴⁰² This line of thinking was identical with the State Department’s thinking that laid the basis for the 1964 bridge building policy, and as Western Europe’s relations with Eastern Europe would only expand in the latter half of the 1960s, this particular purpose of regulating the relations between Eastern and Western Europe with NATO moved to the forefront of American thinking.

On the subject of alliance cohesion, Hughes and INR raised a principal matter. The question of granting the allies more political consultation, which both the Department of Defense and the Department of State had argued was one way to ensure NATO cohesion and stability, raised, according to Hughes the principal choice between unilateralism and multilateralism. Should the US surrender its unilateralist position ‘*its unhibited freedom of action*’⁴⁰³ in foreign policy, to accommodate the Western European wish for actual influence on America’s foreign policy? Or should the US refuse this surrender and instead accept a certain lack of political cohesiveness in the alliance, which would be the result of American refusal of more – or actual – political consultation within the alliance? This choice, which Hughes argued was before the administration, also indicated a fundamental shift in the matter between the European allies and the US in the alliance. The matter of the alliance shifted from a strictly military matter of how to maintain an adequate deterrence to a largely inward looking political matter of how to remain allied despite diverging political interests. Indeed, Hughes argued that Washington had mostly considered NATO’s internal problems as belonging to the military area rather than the political field where they, according to him, rightly belonged.

Hughes cited McNamara’s Select Committee and the MLF as mostly concerned with military perspectives, and claimed that the preoccupation with the military perspectives was quite a paradox. Hughes asked why (pre)occupy NATO with the nuclear question when the US had supremacy, which was accepted by all members of the alliance (with the notable exception of Gaullist France and Gaullist West Germany), and also the field where it was most difficult to substantially alter the existing state of affairs?

In Hughes’ argument the political problem between the US and the European allies departed from the fact that the European allies did not

⁴⁰² INR: The Significance of NATO – Present and Future, Aug. 3, 1965, LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

⁴⁰³ INR: The Significance of NATO – Present and Future, Aug. 3, 1965, LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

necessarily share the American interests, despite the apparent overlap of interest in managing the Western European continent. Indeed, Hughes recognized that the European allies' '*membership of NATO involves or potentially involves them in consequences of American actions in many parts of the world*',⁴⁰⁴ and therefore the allies '*understandably want a chance to make these views known beforehand*' and not being '*cut short by a faits accomplis*' [Hughes underlining].⁴⁰⁵ Hughes argued that this perspective was of overriding importance for the fabric of the alliance, in fact, if the US did not at least give '*appearance – and occasionally the substance*'⁴⁰⁶ of taking the allies viewpoints into political consideration the current strains in NATO would continue.

The most significant question was therefore, according to Hughes, '*the extent to which NATO can and should be used as a forum for the discussion and formulation of broad policies*'.⁴⁰⁷ The choice was between either '*routinely submitting important foreign policy decisions to the advance scrutiny, comment and perhaps even modification of its NATO allies, and thus surrendering, if only to a limited extent, its [the US] unhibited freedom of action, and on the other hand, a continuation or even an intensification of the lack of political cohesiveness in the alliance*'.⁴⁰⁸

Hughes argued that although '*there is a serious question whether a meeting of minds on important issues (except, perhaps, European issues) can often be achieved when the 15 nations involved has so many dissimilarities in their respective views*',⁴⁰⁹ the question of how making minds meet, was indeed where the '*problem of NATO's future evolution lies, rather than in NATO's military or organizational aspects*'.⁴¹⁰

The question of political consultation did not reach the same principal level in the State Department's Steering Group's paper on France and NATO as Hughes analysis did. The State Department headed the so-called 'State-Defense Steering Committee on the Problems Affecting France and NATO', which had among its primary tasks to minimize the possible damage from de Gaulle to the alliance, in particular alliance cohesion, and '*Advance fundamental US objectives for the cohesion of the Atlantic Area, including determination of the nature and timing of*

⁴⁰⁴ INR: The Significance of NATO – Present and Future, Aug. 3, 1965, LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

⁴⁰⁵ INR: The Significance of NATO – Present and Future, Aug. 3, 1965, LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

⁴⁰⁶ INR: The Significance of NATO – Present and Future, Aug. 3, 1965, LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

⁴⁰⁷ INR: The Significance of NATO – Present and Future, Aug. 3, 1965, LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

⁴⁰⁸ INR: The Significance of NATO – Present and Future, Aug. 3, 1965, LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

⁴⁰⁹ INR: The Significance of NATO – Present and Future, Aug. 3, 1965, LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

⁴¹⁰ INR: The Significance of NATO – Present and Future, Aug. 3, 1965, LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

any initiative which might be taken'.⁴¹¹ The concept of alliance cohesion equaled stopping the spread of Gaullist thinking among the European allies.

Prior to the final paper, which was an effort to develop a formal US position on the issue of alliance cohesion in the wake of de Gaulle's challenge,⁴¹² the State Department incorporated the Department of Defense's deliberations on the military aspects of a possible French withdrawal. The Department of State's formal position was based on the premise that NATO was, despite the changes in the East-West relations, essential for America's security, and NATO also served a political purpose, namely as an instrument to support the underlying interests of the Atlantic community. In this perspective the French intentions were, in fact, a '*serious threat to its [the alliance] very survival*',⁴¹³ as de Gaulle especially argued that there were no common interests of the Atlantic community.

Much in line with INR's argument, the Department of State argued that the hitherto success of the alliance was based on a consensus on the need for both the alliance and the integrated command to pose an effective deterrence to the Soviet Union, and that this consensus was a precondition for balancing the Western European powers, indeed, the allies had '*exercised sufficient restraint in seeking to press their national interests to prevent issues within NATO from being pushed to the point of basic confrontation*'.⁴¹⁴ However, '*The current French challenge to NATO raises the question whether the fundamental NATO consensus can be said still to exist among all its members. If it does not, those who continue to regard NATO as indispensable must decide what steps they will take to preserve it*'.⁴¹⁵ The consensus and therefore the principle of integration was, in other words, indispensable for the preservation of NATO, and the State Department in effect asked those of the allies, that continued to view the alliance as indispensable, to recommit to these fundamental principles. Indeed, in another draft of the paper, the department reiterated the Department of Defense's position on the choice before the administration (and the alliance), that the '*central issue is whether there shall be a collective multilateral system between equal sovereign states employing integration only as needed in the interest of effectiveness, or a system of bilateral power politics involving all the dangers of the turn of the 20th century*'.⁴¹⁶ Maintaining the multilateral commitments, i.e., maintain the principle of integration therefore was the sine qua non for maintaining the military effectiveness of the alliance, and indeed, balance

⁴¹¹ Leddy to Bator, attachment, Sep. 17, 1965. LBJL, NSF, Bator Papers, box 26.

⁴¹² Memcon, State & DoD, Aug. 26., 1965. LBJL, NSF, Bator Papers, box 26.

⁴¹³ State Paper: France and NATO, undated. LBJL, NSF, Bator Papers, box 26.

⁴¹⁴ State Paper: France and NATO, undated. LBJL, NSF, Bator Papers, box 26.

⁴¹⁵ State Paper: France and NATO, undated. LBJL, NSF, Bator Papers, box 26.

⁴¹⁶ France and NATO, Sep. 25, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 172.

Western Europe. No other means than the alliance could do exactly that trick.⁴¹⁷

According to the State Department's undated paper, France posed a series of different threats to the alliance, including the withdrawal of French forces from the 'subordination' of the integrated command, and a wish to reform NATO 'drastically' if not eliminate it completely, and the department believed that because of de Gaulle's resolve and his 'tactical flexibility' the US was left with very few options to counter de Gaulle with. However, *'if the alliance sways like a mesmerized snake'* de Gaulle would be able to achieve his objectives, and therefore the US (and others) *'must play judiciously activist role in strengthening NATO'*, and indeed many actions could be taken to both strengthen *'the fabric'* of NATO, and to make the alliance *'less vulnerable'* to French attacks.⁴¹⁸

In the joint proposal, the Departments proposed among other measures, to strengthen the political consultation with the establishment of a post of Deputy Secretary General for Political Affairs, however, without debating the extent of or the possibility of an actual influence on US policy the deputy could have, the Department of State suggested a strictly consultative arrangement. The principal question, which INR had raised whether the political cooperation should be multilateral or if the US should maintain the unilateral position, seemed however, decided upon, indeed, progress in the area of political consultation and other areas, should not involve any 'basic structural reform'.⁴¹⁹ The deputy should exclusively *'assume an active responsibility for strengthening political consultation'*⁴²⁰ and therefore, he should be given *'direct access to the highest level of our own governments.'*⁴²¹ The suggested formal position, in other words, was that an expanded and institutionalized political consultation within the alliance would provide enough substance to fend off the Gaullist accusations of no real partnership and no Western European voice in alliance matters.

As Hughes had already argued, in the light of the divergent European and US interests, that for the sake of the NATO *'fabric'*, the US should give the *'appearance -- and occasionally the substance -- of taking its allies' views carefully into account before finally adopting positions and basic policies'*.⁴²² The departments of State and Defense proposal was probably for the sake of *'appearance and occasionally substance'*.

⁴¹⁷ France and NATO, Sep. 25, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 172.

⁴¹⁸ State Paper: France and NATO, undated. LBJL, NSF, Bator Papers, box 26.

⁴¹⁹ State Paper: France and NATO, undated. LBJL, NSF, Bator Papers, box 26.

⁴²⁰ France and NATO, Sep. 25, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 172.

⁴²¹ France and NATO, Sep. 25, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 172.

⁴²² INR: The Significance of NATO – Present and Future, Aug. 3, 1965, LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

The final recommendation from the 'State-Defense Steering Committee' was that the US with the European allies developed a common approach and position against France and de Gaulle.

The State Department subsequently began a process of developing guidelines for '*further discussion in dealing with prospective French actions against NATO*',⁴²³ which was also intended to force the allies to commit to the principles of integration.

NSAM Drafts

Different draft NSAMs on how the US should engage with the allies in response to the French challenge circulated between the State Department and the White House in the fall 1965. The draft NSAM originated in the State Department, and aimed at '*providing framework and guidance for further discussions with our Allies in dealing with prospective French action against NATO*'.⁴²⁴ The draft NSAM was based on the State-Defense paper's analysis of the purpose of NATO, and recommended that the administration developed a common position towards the French with the rest of the allies, with which the allies would be impelled to take a stand on the principles that de Gaulle attacked.

The formal position, which should be presented to the allies, was straight forward: the US remained committed to the alliance as '*embodied in the 1949 treaty, and specifically to NATO as a norganization*'.⁴²⁵ The US rejected any bilateral arrangement, which incorporated the NATO treaty's article 5, because it would, among other things, dispose with the NATO organization and therefore the American ability to tame and manage the European political credo.⁴²⁶ The draft NSAM's also made it clear that the US was not willing to compromise the integrated structure, indeed, the American objectives, which should be presented to the allies, was among other that '*to preserve the concept of integration, particularly the integrated command*'.⁴²⁷ However, the US was prepared in addition to '*the defensive measures*' to '*explore and cooperate in affirmative action which strengthen the Alliance*'.⁴²⁸

The cross departmental debate on the substance of the text was mostly an effort to 'safeguard' the text against French accusations of hegemonic behavior, indeed, to work around France. Such as making it

⁴²³ Draft NSAM Sept. 25., 1965. LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

⁴²⁴ Draft NSAM, Sept. 25., 1965. LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

⁴²⁵ Draft NSAM, Sept. 25., 1965. LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26; FRUS, LBJL, box 172.

⁴²⁶ France and NATO, Sept. 25, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 172.

⁴²⁷ Draft NSAM, Sept. 25., 1965. LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26; FRUS, LBJL, box 172.

⁴²⁸ Draft NSAM, Sept. 25., 1965. LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26; FRUS, LBJL, box 172.

plain in the consultations with the allies that the US *'are not endeavoring to organize the other NATO countries in a campaign to isolate France or to initiate action against France'*,⁴²⁹ and argue that the issue was one between France and NATO, and not between France and the US.⁴³⁰

The draft NSAM was never endorsed by LBJ, a lack that underpins exactly how difficult the Gaullist challenge was. Indeed, in late October, 1965, the American NATO ambassadors meet in the Hague and discussed the Western European policy in light of de Gaulle, and agreed that the *'most important is for US to make up own policy and get solidly behind it'*.⁴³¹ Johnson did, however, issue one NSAM regarding France, namely NSAM 336 in August, 1965, which called for the prevention of US activities that could *'embarrass United States relations with France'*,⁴³² reflecting how the administration wanted to avoid the direct confrontation with de Gaulle.

Brief conclusion

De Gaulle's challenge to the alliance, more precisely de Gaulle's rejection of the integration principle and accusations of American hegemony in the alliance forced the administration to rethink the purpose of the alliance and the American position on central issues, especially as the administration feared the spread of Gaullist thinking among the European allies. De Gaulle's challenge largely revived the perceptions and reasoning of the late 1940s, in fact, according to the administration at large one purpose with the alliance was, as in the late 1940s, to counter European power politics, and provide the US with an instrument to control the allies to American policy ends. The question to some extent came to be, how a renewed rejection of the European reason of state should be framed.

De Gaulle's continued rejection of the integration principle amounted to a return of the European reason of state in the foreign policy realm according to both the State Department and the Department of Defense, and the Alliance's cohesion was threatened by the prospects of a spread of Gaullist thinking among the allies. The State Department's proposed response to this challenge of cohesion and potential return to European power politics, which became the primary objective in the course of 1965, was therefore to impel the allies to commit to the purpose of the alliance and the principle of integration, which served to balance Western Europe, ensured American leadership,

⁴²⁹ Bator to Bundy, Oct. 8, 1965. LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

⁴³⁰ Memcon, Oct. 8, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 106.

⁴³¹ Memo for the record, Oct. 27, 1965. LBJL, NSF, Bator papers, box 26.

⁴³² NSAM 336, Aug. 6, 1965. LBJL

and maintained an effective deterrence. The Department of Defense in concert with the Department of State proposed to grant the allies more political consultation and continue to work for nuclear sharing arrangements, despite the administration had decided to let the MLF sink out of sight in December, 1964.

The Department of Defense argued that these initiatives should not amount to any structural reform of the alliance, as this would invite further Gaullist attacks. The Department of State however, did not reject the possibility of a fundamental reform out of hand.

De Gaulle's critique also led to a debate on principles, indeed about multilateralism versus unilateralism as the guiding principle for America's relations with the European allies, as INR argued that the political problem between the US and Western Europe derived from the fact that the parties did not necessarily share interests. The question was therefore, if the alliance should be used as a body to formulate policies, and INR therefore asked if the US should surrender American freedom of action in foreign policy and instead admit to political entanglement with Western Europe. No other agency had raised this principal matter. INR did not completely reject multilateralism, but argued that the real problem was to gain a meeting of minds between Western Europe and the US, implicitly suggesting that it did not involve any restraints on American freedom of action.

INR also tabled a triple purpose with the alliance, namely to regulate Western Europe's policies according to American interests, to expand the area of coordination of policies to out of treaty areas, and regulate the relations between Eastern and Western Europe to protect American interest and position in Western Europe.

As the MLF was sinking out of sight in December, 1964, the Johnson administration arrived at a 'new' nuclear position and developed a fully-fledged policy of detachment from the Alliance in the nuclear field. The US would disarm Western Europe, retain the American nuclear veto, and refuse any commitment to a 'European clause', by, as outlined in NSAM 322, maintaining the existing structures of collective security, within which the US enjoyed and maintained the veto right.

Chapter 6 Towards Equality? Reforming NATO and Peace Initiatives, 1965-1966

Introduction

During the spring of 1965, Germany and the rest of the European allies demanded political influence on the strategy towards the German question. Some of the European allies criticized the monopolistic position the Quadripartite Group had towards the German problem, which the other allies considered a European matter that affected all allies. Instead of the monopolistic approach, some of the European allies argued for a multilateral decision-making capacity or at least political influence on the strategy and the suggested solutions to the German question. The Erhard administration also preferred cooperation on the question, but was inclined to consider the question a domestic problem rather than international, if the alliance did not manage to move forward on the question. The question of unilateralism versus multilateralism emerged for the first time as a matter almost amounting to a problem between the European allies and the US with the German question in 1965. By 1965 it was no longer just a matter between the US and France.

In March 1966, de Gaulle withdrew France from NATO's integrated command, as the Johnson administration had forecasted in 1964-1965. Nevertheless, de Gaulle's move threw the alliance into a crisis, and the administration argued, again, for the need to counter alliance disintegration. The allies used de Gaulle's withdrawal as a means to argue for more political consultation in the alliance, a push for normalization of relations with the East, and a solution to the nuclear problem. The Johnson administration responded with a political bargain; the European allies were offered political consultation and a move toward normalization with the East in return for the allies' complete backing of the integration principle.

Moreover, in response to the withdrawal and the attack on the integration principle, Western European calls for an Eastern policy, and the US recognition of the fact that the US was behind the allies in the relations with Eastern Europe, the Acheson Committee proposed a formula of *détente* and deterrence. Indeed the same formula Belgian foreign minister Harmel would propose four months later, to contain the European the allies' Eastern policies, and not least maintain alliance cohesion. The Acheson committee reasoned that on one hand the alliance served a military purpose of deterrence, but on the other hand the alliance should at the same time be moved into the political field as an instrument for a common NATO policy towards the East. NATO's instrumentality to the administration was also a defensive measure to

protect American national interests against the European reason of state. Indeed, the Acheson Committee's proposal was in fact a policy of detachment.

The 1966 bridge building policy was also a means for the administration to control the allies' policies towards the East.

The French withdrawal from the integrated command also re-raised questions about the basic assumptions for America's Western European policy, one of which was Western European unity and Atlantic partnership. After the French withdrawal, Western European unity was, in fact, quite shattered. France and the United Kingdom were not bound together with the rest of Western Europe in any institutionalized structure, and both French and German nationalism was a will-o-the-wisp.

The administration responded to this Western European fragmentation with the tripartite talks. The tripartite talks between Germany, Great Britain, and the US were also about the German offsets; however, the aim of keeping the alliance (and Western Europe) together was the underlying purpose. Furthermore, they served to keep the neo-isolationists from getting an argument for troop withdrawals.⁴³³

In October 1966, the question of allied influence on the political 'area' within NATO was forced on the agenda in Washington again. This time the Belgian foreign minister Pierre Harmel was the instigator. Prior the Harmel's initiative in NATO to undertake a study about the issue, Harmel criticized the tripartite construct as the establishment of a precedent for settlement of problems directly between small groups of alliance members, thus a breach of alliance solidarity. Ultimately it meant, according to Harmel, alliance dis-integration.

European and West German Realignment

De Gaulle's intensive campaign against American leadership in Western Europe forced general questions about American leadership in Western Europe on the agenda in most Western European parliaments in the beginning of 1965, and the question of American leadership in Germany was, naturally, of prime importance to the Johnson administration. To McGhee, the ambassador to Bonn, the question of the need for American leadership in Western Europe, was not really a question. De Gaulle was, according to McGhee, ready to fill out any power vacuum left by America in Western Europe, and clearly de Gaulle's European scheme contradicted American aims and 'designs' for Europe. Furthermore, in the case of Germany – as long as the CDU/CSU was in power, *'the French will be able ... to bring great influence to bear on German policy*

⁴³³ Bator to Johnson, Aug, 23, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 187.

*via internal German politics.*⁴³⁴ thus, McGhee argued, a need for American control with events in Western Germany.

However, according to McGhee, American leadership in Germany rested on two paradoxical circumstances, namely on one hand the Germans resented *'being told what they should do by us'* and on the other hand, Chancellor Erhard relied on the US to *'set a course by which they can steer'*. Indeed, McGhee argued, that a close American-German relationship in foreign policy was necessary even beyond matters exclusively relating to Germany, otherwise the German Chancellor Erhard was unable to fend off the Gaullists within his own government.⁴³⁵

The question was therefore not whether the US should *'exert leadership over the Germans'*,⁴³⁶ but rather how the US should avoid exerting pressure in areas where *'US leadership is not likely materially to affect the course of events ... without direct means of control or pressure'*.⁴³⁷ However, West Germany had an instrumental value for American foreign policy ends. McGhee identified four policy areas in which the US should exert its leadership, namely NATO military strategy and force goals, the nuclear question, political relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and the reunification question.⁴³⁸ These were all areas, in which America and West Germany were in agreement, according to McGhee, which would make American influence and ability to steer events in these policy areas easier and by the same token not invite Gaullist attacks on the policies.

This line of thinking was hardly a break from past years' politics, but rather a re-confirmation of the wisdom of exerting leadership over the Germans for the benefit of American foreign policy ends and also, needless to say, to contain Germany within the West. The need for American leadership in Germany was further reinforced as the German question was put on the agenda in Western Europe and Germany. In March, 1965, Rostow, the Director of the Policy Planning Staff, reported to Rusk that American leadership in Germany was indeed very much needed. In Germany, according to Rostow, there was a *'widespread anxiety that, without US leadership that moves things forward again, even modestly, de Gaulle will gain in power.'*⁴³⁹ Rostow estimated that without US leadership Germany would become *'stronger and more nationally assertive'*, however,

⁴³⁴ McGhee to Rusk, Feb., 24, 1965. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 185.

⁴³⁵ McGhee to Rusk, Feb., 24, 1965. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 185.

⁴³⁶ McGhee to Rusk, Feb., 24, 1965. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 185.

⁴³⁷ McGhee to Rusk, Feb., 24, 1965. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 185.

⁴³⁸ McGhee to Rusk, Feb., 24, 1965. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 185.

⁴³⁹ Rostow to Rusk and Tyler, Mar., 22, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

only Gaullist in *'the sense that it will imitate de Gaulle in a more forthright use of German bargaining power vis-à-vis Washington, Paris, and Moscow.'*⁴⁴⁰

Although the West Germans, at least according to Rostow, preferred cooperation with the allies to German unilateralism, this possible assertiveness also emerged at a March APAG meeting as the German representative Müller-Roschach warned that if the alliance was unable to move on the German unity question, no matter how modest a movement, Germany would end up considering the entire reunification question *'a domestic rather than international'* matter.⁴⁴¹ Rostow also reported that the other allies called for multilateralism on the German question, and that the allies rejected and was dissatisfied with the hitherto *'monopolistic'* approach. Indeed, at the APAG meeting emerged *'a quite strong sentiment to enlarge the role of NATO on the matter of German unity and a European security settlement.'*⁴⁴² The *'familiar dilemma'* facing the US in Western Europe was, according to Rostow, that the whole alliance, and not just the members of the Quadripartite Group, had vital interests in the matter of German reunification and European security, and the allies argued that the *'cost of the present system'* was that no one outside the exclusive quadripartite group had any responsibility nor influence on the policies or strategy for the unification of Germany. This was a clear reflection of the effect of the dual crisis, namely that Western Europe's destiny so far had been managed by the super powers and not the Europeans. Rostow recommended that in order to overcome this *'dilemma'*, that *'if we can get anything like an agreement of the next year on an Alliance strategy towards German unity and a European settlement, either in the Quadripartite Group or as among the UK, Germany, and U.S.... we ought to widen parallel discussions in NATO – notably on the strategy as a whole and the non-treaty aspects of that strategy (e.g., policy towards Eastern Europe).'*⁴⁴³ Rostow did not neglect to recognize the difficulty with obtaining agreement in the quadripartite group, and suggested alternatively that an exclusive group of the US, UK, and Germany might agree to a strategy on the German question.

In other words, the allies' call for some sort of political role for NATO in this central political challenge for Western Europe was met by the administration with a scheme of rather limited scope, indeed *'parallel discussion'*, and not the multilateral solution the allies called for. The implicit premise for the allies' suggestion was, much along the same lines

⁴⁴⁰ Rostow to Rusk and Tyler, March, 22, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁴¹ Rostow to Rusk and Tyler, March, 22, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁴² Rostow to Rusk and Tyler, March, 22, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁴³ Rostow to Rusk and Tyler, March, 22, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

as de Gaulle's claims, a critique of a certain monopolistic approach to the entire question, namely that the exclusive group had a superior and decision-making role at the expense of the rest of the allies even though they had an equal interest in the solution of the matter. Equally important, Rostow rejected this 'strong sentiment' out of hand when he maintained that the exclusive group of the UK, Germany, and the US, which Rostow was confident could agree, should maintain the exclusive decision-making capacity.

In other words, the US was not about to give up any freedom in foreign policy decision-making on the German question by including the rest of the allies. Belgian foreign minister Harmel would criticize the tripartite talks between the UK, Germany, and the US for 'monopoly' in 1966. Other considerations, such as getting 15 states to agree to a political strategy may very well be more difficult than getting three states to agree, may have had an influence on Rostow. However, the rejection of involving the entire alliance into this decisive political area was clearly based on other considerations, such as the freedom of action in foreign policy, as INR discussed in 1965 (see chapter 5).

Rostow further elaborated to Rusk on the German assertiveness, and argued that the recent 'lesson' the Germans had been taught, in connection with their unsuccessful sale of tanks to Israel was that it would be easier for Germany to navigate in the world without consulting US, and instead German policy should be based on '*a nice, straightforward policy of national interest*'.⁴⁴⁴ Rostow had replied to this 'lesson' by submitting a paper at the APAG meeting, in which he argued for consultation '*on problems outside NATO area, if possible on multilateral basis but, if not, on US-German basis*'.⁴⁴⁵

The idea behind this official suggestion to multilateralize the Alliance members' relations beyond the treaty area through NATO was both to gain backing to the American effort in Vietnam and for the US to control the Germans. Indeed, this also extended to the rest of the allies in their dealings with the world beyond the NATO treaty area, as INR also argued as discussed in Chapter 5. Rostow argued about the nature of consultation towards out of treaty areas that the aim with the proposed consultation was not to '*yield total uniformity of action by NATO members*'⁴⁴⁶ but instead, the aim was to on one hand control the allies, and on the other to maintain the American unilateralist position. Indeed, Rostow argued that the consultation should '*produce: a. a common understanding of the*

⁴⁴⁴ Rostow to Rusk and Tyler, March, 22, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁴⁵ Rostow to Rusk, Mar. 22, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301; Rostow to Rusk and Tyler, March, 22, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁴⁶ Rostow to Rusk and Tyler, March, 22, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

*problems involved and the common vital interests at stake; b. collective or individual policies designed to reflect that understanding and those interests at stake, with the subsequent conduct of each member to be determined by the special character of his limitations and possibilities for action in the area.*⁴⁴⁷ This challenge of on one hand controlling the European allies and on the other maintaining the American unilateralism in the alliance should prove to be the greatest challenge in Western Europe to the Johnson administration in these years.

Rostow also proposed, to overcome the immediate strains in the US-German relationship, that Johnson ‘gave a statement on [German] unity’⁴⁴⁸ on V - E Day. Johnson did commit the US to German unity on May 7, 1965;⁴⁴⁹ however, Johnson also re-committed the US to America’s traditional Western European policy when he reiterated the basic premises for America’s relationship with Western Europe was Western European unity and Atlantic partnership. At the same time, Johnson rejected any Gaullist schemes, indeed, LBJ warned in his speech that ‘there are some efforts today to replace partnership with suspicion, and the drive toward unity with a policy of division’,⁴⁵⁰ and characterized this as ‘narrow nationalism’ that had ‘torn and bloodied’ the past, and Johnson also warned that this trend could mean a return to isolationism in America. There was apparently no doubt in the White House that Gaullism constituted a return to European power politics. It followed from this orthodoxy that Johnson did not suggest any schemes or recognized the allies’ calls for some sort of expanded role of NATO into the political area, e.g. German unification or a European settlement. On the contrary, LBJ exclusively talked about military matters in relation to NATO.

INR picked up on Western Europe’s apparent wish for some sort of political role for NATO in relation to German re-unification in the fall of 1965 and the apparent need for a close American-German relationship as the Policy Planning Council had argued for.

INR did not interpret developments in Western Europe as demanding more political consultation as Rostow did, rather Hughes, the director of INR, concluded, much along the same lines as earlier, that NATO ‘has become equally important as a political system which, under US ‘presidency’, provides the best available structure for regulating the inter-relationships of its members and, particularly, for handling the ‘German problem.’ These

⁴⁴⁷ Rostow to Rusk and Tyler, March, 22, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁴⁸ Rostow to Rusk, Mar. 22, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁴⁹ Lyndon B. Johnson: “Remarks Broadcast on the 30th Anniversary of V-E Day.”, May 7, 1965. Online by Peters and Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=26947>. Entry January, 2013.

⁴⁵⁰ Lyndon B. Johnson: “Remarks Broadcast on the 30th Anniversary of V-E Day.”, May 7, 1965. Online by Peters and Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=26947>. Entry January, 2013.

*considerations promise the alliance a long life – provided that it continues ... to serve the political functions regarding West Germany.*⁴⁵¹

INR arrived at this conclusion by arguing that although the allies professed to German unity, they in fact feared German unity would upset the harmonious balance of power in Western Europe, or, more urgent, that the West German quest for unification could either spark a new war in Europe or result in serious Western concessions to the USSR for unification.⁴⁵² In the face of these bleak perspectives, INR argued that the European allies believed that the loss of progress in the Western European integration process, mostly caused by de Gaulle, brought the containment of Western Germany in Western European structures into question, thus the allies looked to the US and the Atlantic structure to handle the Germans. INR seemed in agreement with this apparent Western European contention about German unification. Indeed, according to INR, if the *‘prospects for reunification improve, the intra-West European political system which has emerged since the late 1940s would, at the least, face its most serious threat to date’*,⁴⁵³ Furthermore, the allies wanted *‘the US to remain deeply involved in German affairs. They want the US to maintain intimate ties to German defense and to be the main spokesman for the West in any future dealings with the East on German reunification’*.⁴⁵⁴

INR concluded that the alliance remained an ‘indispensible instrument’ for political stability in Western Europe, but also, that the Alliance was *‘dependent on the maintenance of the same approximate balance [in Western Europe]... therefore is the application of firm US support and restraint on the promotion of the various and, at times, divergent national interests of the European members’* necessary.⁴⁵⁵ INR, in other words, continued to argue that NATO was, much out of necessity, a political means for the US to balance Western Europe and counter the European reason of state and INR believed that this constituted an American ‘presidency’ within the alliance in foreign policy affairs of Western Europe. This was quite contrary to the allies’ call for political influence on how to handle the German problem as Rostow had reported, and INR neglected to consider the ‘familiar dilemma’ of the monopolist approach to the German problem.

Although INR argued that the German problem had gained momentum in Western Europe, even to the extent that it pertained to all questions the European allies were raising on alliance matters,⁴⁵⁶ the Policy Planning Council was calmer, and argued that Germany would be

⁴⁵¹ INR, Aug. 6, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁵² INR, Aug. 6, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁵³ INR, Aug. 6, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁵⁴ INR, Aug. 6, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁵⁵ INR, Aug. 6, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁵⁶ INR, Aug. 6, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

returned to the agenda as the most central of issues between East and West at some point.⁴⁵⁷ Turning to the question of the prospects for a reunification, the Council argued that the West, including Germany and the US, could do nothing to bring about a German reunification, in fact, the US did not need a reunification policy, as reunification was utopian, instead the US needed a policy towards Western Germany to maintain Germany as *'the asset it is today'*.⁴⁵⁸

The Council argued that neither of the different approaches towards German unification held in the administration, addressed the real issue, namely reducing the overriding interest especially Poland and the Soviet Union had in the continued division of Germany. The council argued that none of the Western approaches could do the trick.⁴⁵⁹ The Soviet Union had larger-than-life ideological interests at stake, and Poland *'had no desire once again to serve as the shuttlecock in a Russian-German power contest'*.⁴⁶⁰ Therefore, the council argued, what was really at stake for the US was the *'vitaly important relations with the Federal Republic'*.⁴⁶¹ Indeed, the US-West German relationship had to be handled with *'all priority, care, and delicacy'* even though the Germans were not about, as the European allies believed, to cut a deal with the Soviet Union or otherwise act hazardingly. Rather, the danger lay in a potentially political *'demoralization'* and internal division, which would make Germany a *'burden and a problem'* for the West.⁴⁶²

Indeed much rested on good relations between West Germany and the US, and the Council warned, as the Empty Chair Crisis raged, how European integration schemes and other institutionalizing efforts could result in divisions within the West, which in turn could force the Germans to take sides and even persuade them that German national interests were not served with Western association and, in fact, *'the precise institutional forms of West Germany's association with the West are less important than that she be a part of a West which is as politically united as possible'*.⁴⁶³ This thinking was in line with INR's claim that the real problem between the US and the European allies in the wake of the European rehabilitation was how to make minds meet across the Atlantic.⁴⁶⁴

The question about German unity was therefore a somewhat pseudo question in the American administration in 1965. The State Department's two bureaus, the INR and Policy Planning Council, agreed that the real question was how to maintain and develop the vital

⁴⁵⁷ S/P Aug. 11, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁵⁸ S/P Aug. 11, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁵⁹ Bridge building, isolating GDR, arms control.

⁴⁶⁰ S/P Aug. 11, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁶¹ S/P Aug. 11, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁶² S/P Aug. 11, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁶³ S/P Aug. 11, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁶⁴ See Chapter 5.

American-German relationship and exert leadership over German foreign policy as German assertiveness became stronger and threatened to become the most serious challenge to the European integration scheme and therefore the West. Indeed, INR maintained that NATO served a primary purpose of balancing Western Europe, which was faced with the most upsetting prospect, namely that of German unification.

They also agreed on NATO's instrumental value in the face of a broader tendency of realignment within the alliance. The Council argued that NATO could be used to control both Germany and the rest of the allies in their out of treaty area policies. Rostow introduced a concept to handle the Western European assertiveness in outside treaty area matters, namely political consultation in the alliance that would prevent the European allies from pursuing policies that collided with the alliance's and America's interest, without compromising the US freedom of action in foreign policy by avoiding a complete uniform policy. This concept became the US standpoint at the Harmel exercise during 1967.

However, the allies' call for multilateralism on the German and European question was not accommodated. Rather Rostow's concept of 'parallel discussions' in NATO appeared to be the only response at this point in time.

In the summer of 1965 Johnson and McNamara held a series of meetings with the German Chancellor Erhard in which cordial and mutually reassuring exchanges took place,⁴⁶⁵ and it appears as if the German unity question disappeared from the agenda in Washington until December 1965, when the Policy Planning Council raised the question again, this time in the light of the '*processes of change going on in Eastern Europe and the USSR*'.⁴⁶⁶ These changes made the prospect for a German reunification even bleaker, according to the Council, as the Soviet Union had reasons '*beyond Germany itself*' for refusing unification, as the Kremlin was losing authority in Eastern Europe a united Germany would weaken it further.⁴⁶⁷

Germany divided indefinitely?

Although the Council repeated its conclusion from August 1965, that no prospects for any Western initiative gaining reunification were at hand, and the US should groom the vital relationship with Germany instead, the Council suggested, in December 1965, in a less hopeless and pessimistic line of thought than in the August report, that the American grand strategy should aim at '*creating preconditions which might, should the political forces bearing on the German problem change, help to promote a settlement*

⁴⁶⁵ Memcons, June 4, 1965. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 185.

⁴⁶⁶ Policy Planning Council, dec. 9, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁶⁷ Policy Planning Council, dec. 9, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

*favorable to Western interests.*⁴⁶⁸ Among these preconditions were the ‘strengthening the liberal political order in West Germany. Another is further advance toward economic and political unity in Western Europe – on the theory that it might be easier eventually to draw East Germany into such an association than it would be simply to annex it to a German national state’⁴⁶⁹ and lastly the Council suggested ‘knitting ties of interest’ between Eastern and Western Europe, in particular between West Germany and Poland and Czechoslovakia. The Council concluded that although this might not result in any reunification, these initiatives ‘to the extent these aims can be realized, the West is also placed in the best position to live with a divided Germany indefinitely if necessary.’⁴⁷⁰

Thus, the Council’s idealist plan for a settlement did not presuppose a unification of Germany, rather it could be argued that despite a policy on ‘the strategic plane’ the Council maintained that a German unification was somewhat utopian and therefore the administration needed a viable policy towards the FRG, and in addition, a policy that both served the purpose of relieving the unification process if developments turned favorably, and, more importantly, made an indefinite division of Germany acceptable to Western Germany, and the rest of the Western world. Thus, by December 1965, the Council maintained that the US essentially did not need a policy aimed at reunification of Germany.

Foy Kohler, the ambassador to Moscow, commented on the Council’s analysis, and while agreeing with the argument that making West Germany part of a fully united West was ‘the best position to live with a divided Germany indefinitely’,⁴⁷¹ Kohler argued that it was mistaken to conclude it would make an eventual reunification easier. Instead Kohler claimed that ‘a price will have to be paid for German reunification, and the greater the assets on the Western side (I have in mind those resulting from the economic and military integration of the FRG), the higher the Soviet demands are likely to be and the more difficult it will be for us to relinquish them’,⁴⁷² indeed, this was ‘precisely the dilemma that makes the problem of German reunification so agonizing from our standpoint, and I am afraid the paper fails to deal with it.’⁴⁷³ The Council’s efforts to devise a long term scenario and a component long term US strategy was, in other words, failing to grasp the real problem, as seen from Moscow at least, namely that an integration of Germany into the West made it even more difficult to envision a reunification. Kohler, in fact, argued that America’s policy towards Germany of containing and

⁴⁶⁸ Policy Planning Council, dec. 9, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁶⁹ Policy Planning Council, dec. 9, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁷⁰ Policy Planning Council, dec. 9, 1965. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁷¹ Kohler to Rostow, Jan. 20., 1966. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁷² Kohler to Rostow, Jan. 20., 1966. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

⁴⁷³ Kohler to Rostow, Jan. 20., 1966. NARA, RG 59, lot file 72D139, S/P, box 301.

tying Germany into the West had been mistaken if the goal was to reunite the two Germanies.

The question of German reunification stranded with these apparent unsolvable dilemmas, only to reappear as part of the bigger problem that Western Europe would turn into, seen from Washington at least, as de Gaulle withdrew France from NATO's integrated command, and Washington realized that Western Europe was way ahead of America in their relations with Eastern Europe, all of which happened in the spring 1966.

Reforming NATO

The French 'Attack'

When de Gaulle withdrew France from the integrated command in March 1966, it came as no surprise to the administration. However, as Brands argues, by withdrawing France from the integrated command 'de Gaulle demonstrated that Europe was entering a new era. Of necessity America entered the same new era'.⁴⁷⁴ Schwartz argues that in response to de Gaulle's withdrawal, Johnson '*assumed* the role of a statesman, determined to rally the alliance behind his leadership to regroup and reform NATO for the new challenge of détente'.⁴⁷⁵ Taken together these two statements are more to the point. However, they both fail to recognize the decisive role the other European allies had in this process towards reorganizing the alliance.

On one hand, de Gaulle's withdrawal signaled that a new era in the transatlantic relationship and NATO indeed had begun. The Western European allies had for some time called for multilateralism as the guiding principle in NATO on the central subject of a European settlement, which signified this new era, and immediately after the French withdrawal the British Prime Minister Wilson argued that the time had come for a restructuring of the alliance. This was also with an eye to a détente with the Eastern bloc. On the other hand, the question of how détente figured in the Johnson administration has become increasingly more central to any study of the 1960s. Schwartz's claim reflects the interpretation that the Johnson administration had a clear cut policy and wish for a détente with the East, and that American leadership was necessary to bring the European allies into line with this essentially American end, and for that purpose a reform of NATO was launched. However, as Wilson's letter to Johnson shows, détente and a reform of NATO was not an exclusively American invention. In fact, there was a European pull towards a détente and reform of NATO even

⁴⁷⁴ Brands (1996), p. 88.

⁴⁷⁵ Schwartz (2003), p. 105.

before the French withdrawal as the APAG meeting in 1965 and the increased trade and exchanges between Eastern and Western Europe during the early 1960s revealed.

Johnson's immediate concern was on one hand that de Gaulle's withdrawal would create an anti-French backlash in Congress, which could evolve into a genuine anti-Europe backlash, and on the other hand that the French withdrawal could result in alliance dis-integration.⁴⁷⁶ However, Johnson also saw the French withdrawal as an opportunity, according to Schwartz, to 'solve many alliance related issues'.⁴⁷⁷ However, the urge to solve alliance related problems was not reflecting a certain level of clear-visioned leadership, but rather as an urge out of necessity.

On April 22, 1966 LBJ issued NSAM 345 to the departments of State and Defense, and asked for nuclear planning and the development of '*forward looking proposals that would increase the cohesion of NATO and the North Atlantic community. These should embrace two kinds of measures: a. military and non-military programs affecting primarily the affairs of the free world; b. Constructive political, diplomatic, and economic initiatives addressed to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*'.⁴⁷⁸ Johnson's dual aim was therefore both a détente with the Eastern bloc, and more important for this dissertation's hypothesis, measures that addressed the alliance, including nuclear planning. These were two separate matters. The White House appointed the so-called Acheson Committee, a combined Department of State and Department of Defense group headed by the former Secretary of State Dean Acheson, to come up with a response to de Gaulle's withdrawal, the contemplated alliance disintegration, and to study the future of the alliance in the light of this very withdrawal, and the much feared anti-European backlash. The backlash came with the Mansfield Resolution in August 1966, which called for substantial troop reductions in Western Europe.

The NATO crisis culminated in December 1966. Indeed, the CIA in concurrence with the Department of State believed that the forthcoming NATO ministerial meeting '*promises to be the beginning of the first fundamental reassessment of the Alliance since it was established in 1949*',⁴⁷⁹ and as a matter of fact, it was at this meeting the Harmel exercise was launched and McNamara's Select Committee was transformed into the permanent Nuclear Planning Group. Although much of the NATO crisis and the subsequent transformation of the transatlantic relationship can be contributed de Gaulle's deviation, the European allies had called for

⁴⁷⁶ Brands (1996), p. 101pp & 108p.

⁴⁷⁷ Schwartz (2003), p. 110.

⁴⁷⁸ <http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/nsams/nsam345.asp>

⁴⁷⁹ CIA Dec. 9, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Files of Walt Rostow, box 15; State Paper, Dec. 10, 1966. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meeting File, box 2.

multilateralism, as already evident with the German question. The initiatives such as the Acheson Committee and the measures LBJ requested with NSAM 345 did, therefore, not exclusively come about as a result of American thinking alone, they were also a response to Western European demands for a 'reconstruction' or reexamination of the alliance. Especially the British Labour government led by Wilson and the conservative opposition led by Edward Heath were active proponents for both a reconstruction and a reconfiguration of the alliance towards détente with the Eastern bloc.

The British Impact

Immediately after de Gaulle officially withdrew France from NATO's integrated command and sent his official Memorandum to the allies on March 11th, 1966, the British prime minister Wilson sent his preliminary thoughts on the matter to Johnson, and stated that the French withdrawal presented an excellent opportunity for a '*radical examination of its [NATO's] structure, force levels, and financial arrangements*'⁴⁸⁰ and when bringing the structure '*up to date*' it should be done with an eye to a détente with the Eastern bloc.⁴⁸¹ Wilson warned that if the alliance overcompensated for the French withdrawal, the allies risked making the détente more difficult.

Although the overall reconstruction of the alliance would turn out to be a most pressing issue, Francis Bator, Johnson's National Security Advisor, mostly focused on Wilson's remarks on Germany in his memo to Johnson, reflecting the overall importance Johnson and his advisors attached to Germany. According to Bator, Wilson addressed both German reunification and most important the nuclear question. Bator believed that Wilson argued that the US should '*encourage the Germans to work harder for an East-West détente, and thereby for reunification, and to spend less time trying to get their hands on nuclear weapons*'.⁴⁸² Secretary of State Rusk disagreed and argued that Wilson instead by implication suggested '*a bilateral effort on the part of our two countries to impose a solution on the Germans*'⁴⁸³ on the nuclear question. Despite the internal disagreement on what Wilson indeed meant, Wilson, in fact, suggested tripartite talks between the UK, Germany, and the US on nuclear matters, these talks would proceed in August 1966, and it may even be possible to argue that the tripartite talks to a large extent was a British invention, rather than, as Schwartz argues, a purely American invention, which Johnson offered

⁴⁸⁰ Wilson to Johnson, Mar., 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁴⁸¹ Wilson to Johnson, Mar., 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁴⁸² Bator to Johnson, Mar., 22, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁴⁸³ Rusk to Johnson, Mar. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

Erhard in the wake of the financial problems FRG had.⁴⁸⁴ Johnson decided to reply in a 'soft' manner to Wilson warning against putting strains on the Germans.⁴⁸⁵ The fear of German assertiveness was also practiced in the White House, and Johnson probably believed that the Policy Planning Council was right, when it stated that the primary objective with US policy towards West Germany was to remain as close as possible.

Although the White House exclusively addressed the German matter in the reply to Wilson, Rusk suggested a much lengthier and substantive reply to Wilson that revealed the State Department's thinking on the entire subject matter of NATO organization, which Rusk already had forecasted in May, 1965, in the wake of the French challenge to NATO.⁴⁸⁶ Indeed, '*sounder organization of NATO's structure, forces and financial arrangements will be useful and important. Something more is necessary to add strength, purpose and cohesion after de Gaulle's assault*',⁴⁸⁷ and '*a détente with the East and the strengthening of NATO seem to me two sides of the same coin. We in the West can make progress toward a settlement with the East only by maintaining and improving our collective strength both to deter and to bargain*.' [with the USSR on the German question]⁴⁸⁸ Rusk also suggested that as Wilson's assumption was that de Gaulle's actions offered opportunities, '*ways and means must be found in London, Bonn and Washington. I look forward to your further suggestions*'.⁴⁸⁹ There were, in other words, a correlation in the thinking between the State Department and the Wilson government, at least on the need for some sort of restructuring of NATO and NATO's relationship to a détente, and the tripartite approach.

On the same day, Secretary Rusk sent out a telegram to all NATO capitals interpreting Johnson's statement on de Gaulle's actions. Johnson had claimed that they '*raise grave questions regarding the whole relationship between the responsibilities and benefits of the alliance*'.⁴⁹⁰ To Rusk, this meant that de Gaulle had chosen a 'second class position' for France in the alliance, and '*this second-class position will be dramatized if we can demonstrate, after French obstructionism has been removed from NATO, that the organization will move vigorously forward to become an effective instrument for military security and play an important role in developing a common European policy for the alliance*'.⁴⁹¹

⁴⁸⁴ Schwartz (2003), p. 130. SE MERE

⁴⁸⁵ Bator to Ball, Mar. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁴⁸⁶ Rusk had not ruled out any fundamental reform of NATO. See Chapter 5.

⁴⁸⁷ State Department's draft Reply to Wilson, undated. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁴⁸⁸ State Department's draft Reply to Wilson, undated. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁴⁸⁹ State Department's draft Reply to Wilson, undated. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁴⁹⁰ State Department to NATO capitals, Mar. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁴⁹¹ Rusk to NATO capitals, Mar. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

On March 29 1966, Wilson sent his expanded and further thoughts on the problems de Gaulle had brought on the alliance. De Gaulle's '*19th century nationalism ... and his bull in a china shop tactics*'⁴⁹² was a danger to the alliance however, Wilson argued. '*it would be wrong to conclude from all this that all the General's thoughts are wrong-headed, his assessments of the way the world is moving completely wide off the mark and that everything he is trying to do is totally unacceptable to all of us*'.⁴⁹³ Wilson then went on to argue that de Gaulle's propositions that the nature of threat from the Soviet Union had changed, and that, since the danger had decreased, the West should follow a policy of détente with the Soviet Union, were in fact correct. Wilson also argued that '*the opportunity that now exists for all of us to re-examine the structure and the purposes of NATO also provides an opportunity for Germany to reassess her legitimate national objectives*'.⁴⁹⁴ Although the message about a re-examination of both the structure and purpose of the alliance was somehow veiled in the German question, it was nevertheless a radical new approach to the alliance Wilson suggested that ran counter to the hitherto strategy that had prevailed in the administration throughout 1965, that is to work around de Gaulle and maintain the alliance in its original 1940s dressing. Wilson also came clean as to the nuclear question and Germany. He ruled out a hardware solution because it would hinder a reunification, and suggested instead '*that we should work now for a solution of the NATO nuclear problem which will meet the German need for a share in the consultative and decision-making process*',⁴⁹⁵ much along the same lines as McNamara's Select Committee, as discussed in chapter 4. The fundamental and almost all-encompassing scope of Wilson's 'background' thoughts was not wasted on the White House; Bator commented to Johnson that '*since the message has implications for the full range of our policies vis-à-vis Europe and the Soviets, the reply will require some careful work*'.⁴⁹⁶

The British activism puzzled both the American ambassador to London, Bruce and probably the rest of the administration.⁴⁹⁷ In April the CIA argued that the British activism rested partly on their position as '*stand-patters par excellence so far as the alliance is concerned*',⁴⁹⁸ their belief that NATO was necessary means to keep the US in Europe, that NATO was a means for extending British influence via the special relationship on the continent, and '*above all*' NATO was the mechanism which controlled

⁴⁹² Wilson to Johnson, Mar. 29, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁴⁹³ Wilson to Johnson, Mar. 29, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁴⁹⁴ Wilson to Johnson, Mar. 29, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁴⁹⁵ Wilson to Johnson, Mar. 29, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁴⁹⁶ Bator to Johnson, Mar. 29, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁴⁹⁷ Bruce to Rusk forwarded to Johnson, mar. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁴⁹⁸ CIA, Apr. 2, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

and kept Germany tied in.⁴⁹⁹ However, the CIA also argued that US ‘reservations as to the precise identity of US and British views regarding every aspect of the crisis of the Alliance and how it should be handled may still be in order’ indeed, the Conservative Heath had argued that there was a need to restructure the balance between Europe and the US in NATO, and that the allies, in fact, should work this out with France.⁵⁰⁰ As for the governing Labour Party the ‘desire for disarmament and distrust of Germany’⁵⁰¹ was very much real, and Labour was even less likely to let a hardware solution pass, in fact, ‘if Paris shows any signs of wavering, London [Labor] may see greater advantage in pragmatic arrangements to keep the French tied in some way to NATO’.⁵⁰²

Whereas there was some uncertainty about the British errand, the CIA argued that the rest of the allies was also somewhat in flux, indeed, the CIA concluded that ‘On balance it would therefore appear that we face in NATO a crisis of indeterminate length and uncertain outcome – and one which has the potential for changing in a massive way the whole European outlook’.⁵⁰³

Responses to the NATO Crisis

The Nuclear Issue

Wilson’s response to de Gaulle’s withdrawal put the ‘full range of our policies vis-à-vis Europe’, as Bator expressed it to Johnson, on the agenda in Washington, and one of the most urgent issues was the question of nuclear sharing. However, the British Prime Minister was not the only Western European ally that argued for a solution to the endless nuclear problem, the Dutch ambassador had ‘urged’ the State Department to take up the matter ‘since France has made the discussion possible’.⁵⁰⁴ And this was exactly what de Gaulle’s withdrawal made possible, as discussed in chapter 4 and 5, the administration’s fear of the German Gaullists in CDU/CSU had ultimately restrained the Johnson administration from pursuing a solution to the nuclear problem. Indeed, the prospects of a Gaullist take-over in Western Germany had effectively stopped any discussion of any nuclear issue, and only McNamara’s Select Committee had had a chance against Gaullist attacks because the Select Committee was entangled in NATO and not subjected to a possible French veto. As de Gaulle had withdrawn from the Integrated Command the French President had also given up on a certain political leverage, which INR talked about in the spring 1965.⁵⁰⁵ Nonetheless, the administration was

⁴⁹⁹ CIA, Apr. 2, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁵⁰⁰ CIA, Apr. 2, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁵⁰¹ CIA, Apr. 2, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁵⁰² CIA, Apr. 2, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁵⁰³ CIA, Apr. 2, 1966. LBJL, NSF, France, box 177 (1of2).

⁵⁰⁴ Rusk to Johnson, undated. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵⁰⁵ INR to Rusk, May 4, 1965. LBJL, NSF, France, box 171.

still somewhat anxious about providing the German Gaullists ammunition in the nuclear issue even after the French withdrawal.⁵⁰⁶

The National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM) 345 issued in April 22, 1966 was the first response from Johnson to the NATO crisis. Rostow, who by March 31, 1966 had left as Chairman for State Department's Policy Planning Council to become Special Assistant to Johnson for National Security Affairs⁵⁰⁷ proposed the NSAM. Rostow's proposal, which was backed by the entire administration namely, McNamara (Defense), Ball (State), Bator (White House), and Acheson (LBJs confidant and former Secretary of State 1949-53), it summed up the interim position across departments on the nuclear question in particular and the more vaguely formulated '*greater equality of partnership with the U.S.*'⁵⁰⁸ Rostow proposed the NSAM to on one hand find a solution to the nuclear issue, and on the other hand find measures to increase the cohesion of the alliance. The departments of State and Defense responses to the NSAM were, according to Rostow, the point of departure for a response to Wilson's letter.

On the nuclear question the administration agreed that the matter had to be resolved, and that the administration '*must concentrate urgently on the design of arrangements for nuclear consultation*' to make it '*as effective an item in our policy as can be done*'.⁵⁰⁹ From there, Rostow argued, the administration could '*cautiously feel our way on the hardware issue*'.⁵¹⁰ Although it hardly constituted a disagreement on substance but rather on means, the European clause divided the administration. McNamara argued that the European clause should be explicitly excluded already when examining the possibilities for a NATO nuclear force, whereas Ball and Rostow argued that it would be politically dangerous to explicitly exclude this from the beginning, as it might play into the hands of Gaullists. Instead Rostow suggested that the administration should '*have an understanding ... that we would quietly work against it [the European clause] in our negotiations*'.⁵¹¹ The orthodox position on the nuclear matter reflected that the question of equality within the alliance could not, in fact, be realized in the nuclear field. Instead what the foreign policy staff across departments agreed upon was that with the French withdrawal from the integrated command, the UK and Germany had to be pulled closer together to provide the political basis for an integrated deterrent towards the USSR. This was the way, according to Rostow, to look at the nuclear issue.⁵¹² In April 1966, Rostow, Rusk and McNamara individually

⁵⁰⁶ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵⁰⁷ Rostow took over from McGeorge Bundy who left Washington.

⁵⁰⁸ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵⁰⁹ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵¹⁰ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵¹¹ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵¹² Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 17, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

suggested tripartite talks, probably inspired by Wilson, as one way to bring these two parties closer together.⁵¹³

The second part of the NSAM aimed at increasing Alliance cohesion and how to reach out to Eastern bloc. The idea behind increasing alliance cohesion was, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, based on the premise that if other allies followed the French example and rejected the principle of integration, the alliance would fragment. In the administration's thinking, the integration principle stood between a return to the European power politics and the current status quo of a balanced Western Europe. Rostow, however, added another argument. According to Rostow in the 'best circumstances' the Alliance would be weakened after the regrouping of the alliance in the wake of the French withdrawal, and Rostow claimed that for the European parliaments and Congress to '*back our policy of maintaining an integrated NATO, they will need to believe that we are not simply defending our ideas of the late 1940s but recognizing two real factors on the present scene and looking into the future*'⁵¹⁴ namely, as Wilson had pointed out, '*the desire in Europe for greater equality of partnership with the US*', and the calls for a détente with the Eastern bloc.

The Political Bargain

Rostow and Rusk thus considered the question of 'equality' and political consultation, which Wilson and other European allies had brought forward during 1965 and 1966, as equally important to the nuclear question because it, in fact, pertained to NATO's deterrent capability. Indeed, in Rostow's argument 'equality of partnership' was something the US should grant the allies to maintain the integrated structure, and therefore a credible deterrent. The same argument was the reason why, Rostow argued, the administration should recognize '*the potentialities offered by changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe for moving in the direction of normalizing East-West relations*.'⁵¹⁵ Rostow's argument was a response to the very situation in the alliance, which CIA's analysis of the NATO 'crisis' that followed from Wilson's extended response to de Gaulle's withdrawal, had characterized as 'of indeterminate length' and having the potential to change the European position on the integration principle. This was the main reason for Rostow's preoccupation with getting the European parliaments to back the American '*policy of*

⁵¹³ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 17, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28; Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28; Rusk and McNamara to Johnson, April 12, 1966, LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵¹⁴ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵¹⁵ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

maintaining the integrated command.⁵¹⁶ In other words, political consultation, which would grant some sort of equality, and ‘normalizing East-West relations’ was a bargain: the US would offer the European allies political consultation in return for backing to the principle of integration, the very heart of NATO as Rusk had put it in 1964.⁵¹⁷ Thus, the immediate reaction from the Johnson administration to the crisis that de Gaulle had brought on by the withdrawal from the integrated command was essentially to get the European allies to recommit to the idea of the late 1940s, which the State Department already had proposed with the draft NSAM of September 1965.⁵¹⁸ Indeed, in 1965 the idea had been to force the European allies to take a stand on especially the integration principle in the light of de Gaulle’s loud critique of integration in the alliance, and, as argued in Chapter 5, the challenge from de Gaulle had, in fact, initiated a process of reframing the rejection of the European reason of state anno 1960s on the part of the Johnson administration.

The question, however, remains if the ambitions to grant more equality and political consultation were genuine, or exclusive a strategy to maintain a complete and convincing backing to the integration principle from the European allies? Rostow told Johnson that ‘*there is a correct feeling [within the foreign policy staff] that we need more partnership in the Atlantic on issues like ... political consultation ... more East-West bridge building by Atlantic nations*’.⁵¹⁹ Was it, in fact, an omen for a retreat from the unilateralist position?

The collective Department of State and Department of Defense response to Johnson’s call for proposals to increase the cohesion of NATO and the North Atlantic Community was quite traditional in its reading of the purpose of NATO and America’s role in the alliance. The Acheson Committee, which was headed Johnson’s confidant Dean Acheson, argued, much in line with Wilson’s observations, that Germany and a possible détente with Eastern Europe was one of the most central areas of interest in the light of the ‘disintegrating forces’ in the alliance de Gaulle had sparked.⁵²⁰ The Committee argued that the most serious outcome of recent events would be if Germany decided to withdraw from the integrated structure and shift to a ‘similar’ unilateralism as de Gaulle. The main priority was therefore to keep Germany in the integrated structure. State and Defense further argued, that even though the Soviet threat had diminished as a consequence of the military

⁵¹⁶ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

However, it is also important to note that after the French withdrawal, large parts of the foreign policy staff argued that de Gaulle was right in his observations on the changing threat from the Soviet Union.

⁵¹⁷ See chapter 4.

⁵¹⁸ See chapter 5.

⁵¹⁹ Rostow to Johnson, Apr. 17, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵²⁰ Ball & Vance to Johnson, June 3, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

strength of NATO, alliance cohesion would rest *'quite as much on its political basis. In short, NATO is not merely a military structure to prepare a collective defense against military aggression, but also a political organization to preserve the peace of Europe'* indeed, *'As long as the German problem remains the chief danger point, the basic political function of the alliance is the collective management of the German-Soviet relationship in the unsettled Central European setting*' [Bator's underlining].⁵²¹ Controlling Germany, in other words, continued to be a primary reason for NATO.

The Committee also argued that NATO served to control the European allies' outreach to the Eastern bloc – the European détente, much in line with the motivations for the 1964 bridge building policy: *'implementing NATO's political function is central to its cohesion during the present strains. The first step is to bring home to the NATO allies the need for an agreed NATO policy regarding the division of Europe and ... Germany'* [Bator's underlining],⁵²² indeed, according to the memo the European allies had *'very little understanding that all this [détente] is meaningless unless action stems from an agreed policy for healing the division of Europe and Germany on a sound, equal, and lasting basis.'*⁵²³ Contrary to 1964, this line of thinking now had resonance in the White House, as Bator's underlining reflects. The Acheson Committee however, had reservations and somewhat contradicted their proposal and line of thinking; they warned, implicitly against a softening the deterrence posture, that the agreed NATO policy should *'not be identified too closely with NATO. NAT is a military treaty. A more flexible Western policy will be vulnerable to Soviet attack and Eastern European suspicion if this policy and NATO are tied together.'*⁵²⁴ In addition, another danger with a concerted Western policy was that the allies could eventually use détente as an excuse for cutting down on their defense budgets. On the other side of the iron curtain, the Committee warned that the Eastern bloc might perceive détente as yet another attempt to roll-back communism. Indeed that *'would be a misfortune as it would defeat the purpose of the policy [to control the allies] and open us to an effective propaganda charge that the US lags behind its allies in opening peaceful intercourse across the division of Europe.'*⁵²⁵

In essence, the Committee argued that an exclusive European détente movement could damage not only alliance and alliance cohesion, but also the US position in the Eastern bloc countries. The US, as a matter of fact, lagged behind its European allies. The American initiatives, which the Committee proposed towards the Eastern countries, were designed to keep up with Western Europe, and deal

⁵²¹ Ball & Vance to Johnson, June 3, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵²² Ball & Vance to Johnson, June 3, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵²³ Ball & Vance to Johnson, June 3, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵²⁴ Ball & Vance to Johnson, June 3, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵²⁵ Ball & Vance to Johnson, June 3, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

*‘effectively and quickly with those aspects of our own behavior that set us apart and make us the most restrictive member of the Western community.’*⁵²⁶ The latter perspective was relayed to Johnson at the meeting that resulted in NSAM 352 Bridge Building, which indeed, requested a collective Western bridge building effort instead of the Western European practice of bilateralism.

Following the French withdrawal from the integrated command the administration faced a true challenge in their relations not only with France but also the rest of the European allies. The administration quickly realized however, that to preserve the fundamental integration principle, they had to strike a bargain with the European allies. Rostow, argued that in return for European backing to this principle the European allies would get political consultation within the alliance and a promise to move the alliance towards ‘normalizing’ the relationship between East and West.

The Acheson committee stressed the alliance’s political function, namely managing Germany, and that the implementation of this political function was very much needed to preserve alliance cohesion. The Acheson Committee also stressed that the alliance ultimately served to control the allies in their effort to reach out to Eastern Europe. Thus, the administration did, in fact, respond to the crisis with an effort to maintain the traditional purpose of the alliance, that is managing Germany and tying Western Europe into an integrated military alliance.

The Acheson Committee’s line of thinking also, in fact, preempted the Harmel formula of 1967. The Committee essentially argued that NATO along with its classic military posture, i.e., deterrence should move into the area of easing tension between East and West. Indeed, the Acheson Committee continuously stressed the need for the move into the political field and the need for a coordinated NATO policy towards the East on the premise that the deterrence was upheld. However, the Acheson Committee’s motivation for this move and establishment of dual purpose of NATO differed somewhat from the Harmel proposal, as the committee argued this line of policy as primarily a means to contain the European allies’ Eastern policies and maintain alliance cohesion, and not to overcome the Cold War in Europe.

At the same time it was evident that equality within the alliance had its limits. On the nuclear question the US maintained its policy of detachment.

Thus, mostly because European allies believed, contrary to the Johnson administration, that the military *raison d’être* for the alliance had diminished, the Johnson administration applied a political *raison*

⁵²⁶ Ball & Vance to Johnson, June 3, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

d'être. This call for moving the alliance away from the strictly military field into the political field was demanded by Western Europe rather than the US, indeed, both the British Prime Minister Wilson, the Belgian Foreign Minister Harmel,⁵²⁷ and the allies at the APAG meeting as early as in March 1965, had called for moving the alliance into the political area and called for a reexamination of the purpose of the alliance.

The move towards more political consultation, equality, and a détente with the East was impelled upon the administration as it believed consultation would counter alliance disintegration. The Johnson administration, mostly the Department of State, had also questioned the then purpose of the alliance in several studies in 1964-1965 in the light of de Gaulle's excesses, and it was therefore not surprising that the response to de Gaulle's withdrawal amounted to this move into the political field.

The question remained, though, exactly how this 'agreed NATO policy' towards the East and the political equality should come about, and if, in fact, it would be a genuine attempt to move from unilateralism to multilateralism as the guiding principle for the Atlantic partnership. The Acheson group failed to come up with proposals to this end, although they forecasted that Johnson could give a speech by September 1966 to announce that *'the time will have come for the inauguration of a new chapter in the life of NATO'*.⁵²⁸

An Agreed NATO Policy?

The State Department's Policy Planning Council however, came up with a proposal which called *'for NATO to act as a clearing house and coordinating point for East-West contacts'*⁵²⁹ as the CIA characterized it a few months later, in December 1966. These deliberations did not go into the Acheson Committee's proposal, rather it was a response to the continued Western European calls for some sort of action in the East-West field, and the German calls for a reunification strategy within NATO, and a response to the possible Warsaw Pact proposal for a European security conference, which the council believed was on the horizon in the spring 1966.

Henry Owen of the Policy Planning Council argued that Rusk, at the Brussels Ministerial Meeting later in the same month (May), should deliver a major speech on East-West relations, putting forward that NATO had met the Soviet challenge and now the time had come for NATO to seek *'to create an environment in which the division of Germany and*

⁵²⁷ Memcon Johnson & Harmel, May 20, 1966. FRUS, Vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, 1964-1968, doc. 167.

⁵²⁸ Ball & Vance to Johnson, June 3, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵²⁹ CIA, Dec. 9, 1966. Rostow box 15.

Europe can be healed,⁵³⁰ much in line with the Western allies' thinking as displayed in Wilson's letters and at the March, 1965, APAG meeting. The envisioned strategy to this end was to 'encourage' change in Eastern Europe by increased trade, exchanges across the Iron Curtain, and security guarantees. However, the message Owen urged Rusk to deliver to the European allies at the NATO ministerial meeting was one of close concert. Accordingly, Rusk should argue for '*close concert in shaping and carrying out this strategy - both among the FRG and the three Western powers with special responsibility for Germany, and within NATO as a whole.*'⁵³¹ And once the strategy was agreed upon '*all should agree to work closely together in carrying it out; no steps should be taken without the closest consultation.*'⁵³² Furthermore, Rusk should bring forward that in the immediate period ahead '*there will be intensive discussions between interested countries - looking to agreement both on this broad strategy and on arrangements for close concert in carrying out*'⁵³³ and the US was willing to play '*its full part in such discussions.*'⁵³⁴

The idea behind advancing close concert so forcefully was both an immediate preparation of the alliance to meet the possible Warsaw Pact proposal in concert, but also, more importantly, to launch in the longer term the setup of a quadripartite group 'de Gaulle willing' within the alliance to '*seek agreement on the broad outlines of a common strategy*', which would have a vision for German unification at its heart. To this end, Owen envisioned 'regular and periodic meetings between' the members of the quadripartite or tripartite group. Only when this exclusive group had agreed upon a particular strategy, would there be '*periodic working group meetings at which NATO wide cooperation and support in carrying out that strategy can be sought.*'⁵³⁵ Owen also spoke about the necessity of sustaining Western European moral '*by holding out a concept which plausibly relates presently feasible actions to the end goal, and thus enhances Western governments' ability to pursue the agreed strategy and resist diversionary moves.*'⁵³⁶

The necessity of close concert was, in fact, an attempt to streamline or even control the European allies' policies to the ends the quadripartite or tripartite group would agree upon. Needless to say, America was the undisputed leader of this group. Thus, although NATO indeed moved into the political field with Council's proposal, was supplied with a political *raison d'être*, and a certain level of consultation and cooperation on the alliance's foreign policy, the Council in fact did not consider

⁵³⁰ Owen to Rusk, May 4, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council ...box 313.

⁵³¹ Owen to Rusk, May 4, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council ...box 313.

⁵³² Owen to Rusk, May 4, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council ...box 313.

⁵³³ Owen to Rusk, May 4, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council ...box 313.

⁵³⁴ Owen to Rusk, May 4, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council ...box 313.

⁵³⁵ Owen to Rusk, May 4, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council ...box 313. Of course de Gaulle was behind the scenes, as one immediate reason for a common strategy towards the East was to show Europe both East and West, that de Gaulle was not the only one who cared for healing the European division.

⁵³⁶ Owen to Rusk, May 4, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council ...box 313.

whether this step into a tripartite or quadripartite group entailed multilateralism at the expense of American unilateralism.

The fact that neither the Acheson Committee nor the Council considered this aspect could arguably be seen as reflecting certain self-assuredness in America's unilateralist position.

Rusk revealed to the German foreign minister Schroeder that he wanted to move NATO into the political field *'to combat the impression that NATO is merely a military alliance, that its hour need has passed and that the defense of NATO is simply a defense of the status quo. Therefore I think we should demonstrate publicly at Brussels that NATO has an equal concern in moving towards improvement of relations with the East'*.⁵³⁷ Thus, the deliberations at Brussels Ministerial Meeting in December 1966, resulted in a Communiqué that established *'NATO as a clearing house and coordinated point for East-West contacts'*,⁵³⁸ and equally important, the final communiqué established the necessity of upholding a deterrent as *'in view of the basic aims of the Soviet Union, the level of its armed forces, and its continuing allocation of a high proportion of economic and technological resources for military purposes, the Ministers concluded that it is imperative for the West to maintain adequate forces of deterrence and defence.'*⁵³⁹ The contours of NATO's dual matter of détente and deterrence was indeed, already evident. Most important, however, the political bargain Rostow and others had put forward in the spring 1966 immediately after de Gaulle's withdrawal of France, namely in exchange for a recommitment to the principle of integration, the European allies would get political consultation and a turn towards a détente with the East, also found its way to the final communiqué. In a less forthright way the communiqué read: *'Owing to the conditions of security created and maintained by an effective common defence of the North Atlantic area, political consultation among partners allows initiatives to be taken which can contribute not only to the stability of East-West relations but also to the general well being of mankind.'*⁵⁴⁰

Questioning the Atlantic Concert - Europeanism

Although both the Acheson Committee and the Policy Planning Council argued for an agreed NATO policy towards the Eastern bloc, the Policy Planning Council questioned what the real target with this line of thinking was. Sparked by an article by Zbigniew Brzezinski in Foreign Affairs, Doherty argued that a concerted Atlantic policy towards the Eastern bloc was a means to 'revivify' Atlantic partnership and promote

⁵³⁷ Rusk to Schroeder, May, 23, 1966. FRUS, vol 13 doc. 169.

⁵³⁸ CIA, Dec., 9, 1966. LBJL, NSF Rostow box 15.

⁵³⁹ Final Communiqué Jun, 7-8, 1966. www.nato.int

⁵⁴⁰ Final Communiqué Jun, 7-8, 1966. www.nato.int

'Western unity under American leadership rather than European unity'.⁵⁴¹ Doherty argued that this line of thinking was very much like Acheson's that *'American domination' of NATO was both 'necessary and inevitable'*.⁵⁴² In fact, State Department in general appeared to be in agreement with this statement. Doherty however, argued differently and advocated Europeanism.⁵⁴³

Doherty claimed that de Gaulle's withdrawal questioned America's Western European policy, and taken together with the Cold War's 'loss of relevance',⁵⁴⁴ the US ought to reexamine its role in promoting European unity, and ending the division of Germany and Europe, indeed, *'perhaps the time has come to let the Europeans devise their own initiatives'*.⁵⁴⁵ Although the US should not withdraw completely from Europe, the 'frantic search' for a viable Western European policy should be avoided (like Tyler's criticism of the Western European policy in 1965⁵⁴⁶) because the Western Europeans were afraid that certain initiatives would harm the relationship with America. The question it all came down to, according to Doherty, was if not America's long term interest would *'be served by the promotion of a juridically [sic] based European unity rather than preserving an Atlantic partnership which juridically [sic] speaking at least, is merely an American-led power bloc.'*⁵⁴⁷ Doherty claimed the former was the only way to go, as it was America's interest and not 'prestige' which concerned the administration. Although this line of Europeanist thinking was rare, it was discussed at a Council meeting, and portrays exactly how this was times of Western European realignments, and that the administration's policy towards Western Europe indeed was, at least according to Doherty, about maintaining American leadership in Western Europe.

Bridge Building

Despite the numerous studies and proposals from the Acheson Committee and the Policy Planning Council, the administration's Western European policy remained in a deadlock. The nuclear problem and the problem of alliance cohesion were unresolved. Rusk called a meeting in June, 1966, with Johnson and the rest of the foreign policy staff, in an effort to overcome this apparent bureaucratic deadlock or even resistance 'at the middle levels'⁵⁴⁸ to develop an agreed policy

⁵⁴¹ Doherty to Owen, Jul. 11., 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁴² Doherty to Owen, Jul. 11., 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁴³ Doherty to Owen, Jul. 11., 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁴⁴ Doherty to Owen, Jul. 11., 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁴⁵ Doherty to Owen, Jul. 11., 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁴⁶ See chapter 5.

⁵⁴⁷ Doherty to Owen, Jul. 11., 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁴⁸ Bator to Johnson, July 6., 1966. LBJL, Bator papers, box 28.

towards NATO and 'constructive' initiatives in Europe.⁵⁴⁹ Rusk raised the nuclear problem and the question of cohesion in the alliance at the meeting, and recommended that Department of State and Defense initiated tripartite discussion with the British and the Germans to find a solution to the nuclear problem.⁵⁵⁰ Rusk also recommended that McNamara's Special Committee should be made permanent as the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG).⁵⁵¹

Under the heading of '*Measures to increase cohesion in NATO*' in Rusk's talking points for the meeting with Johnson, Rusk argued that the foremost measure to increase cohesion in NATO was '*preparation for a settlement in Eastern Europe*'.⁵⁵² Wilson's – and other European allies' – demands for a policy towards Eastern Europe forced the US to act, indeed, according to Rusk, '*in many ways the U.S. is behind our allies*'⁵⁵³ and as the administration '*already had said much*'⁵⁵⁴ about a détente with the Eastern bloc at the May 1966 Brussels ministerial meeting, the administration had to make concrete proposals for a policy towards the East.⁵⁵⁵ Rusk also recommended that the department prepared a speech to Johnson on NATO to increase the Alliance cohesion.

The result from the meeting was NSAM 352 entitled Bridge Building, with which Johnson called on the Secretary of State for '*in consultation with our Allies – we actively develop areas of peaceful cooperation with the nations of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. He [LBJ] has asked the Secretary of State to examine and propose to him specific actions the Government might take. These actions will be designed to help create an environment in which peaceful settlement of the division of Germany and of Europe will become possible.*'⁵⁵⁶

In other words, by July 1966, the political bargain was official policy; the US should develop a policy towards Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in political consultation with the European allies. As already discussed, the reasoning behind the political bargain was to sustain and maintain the alliance and work against the dis-integrating forces de Gaulle had set in motion, and NSAM 352 was indeed a call for means to overcome this, and probably to compete with the French détente scheme. Moreover, in line with the Acheson Committee's recommendation of the 'Harmel formula', NSAM 352 was a call to launch the 'détente pillar' in NATO as a means to contain the allies Eastern policies. Apart from this, NSAM 352 was also a token of the

⁵⁴⁹ Bator to Johnson, Jun. 20. 1966. LBJL, Bator papers, box 28.

⁵⁵⁰ Talking points, Jun 23., 1966. LBJL. Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵⁵¹ Talking points, Jun 23., 1966. LBJL. Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵⁵² Talking points, Jun 23., 1966. LBJL. Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵⁵³ Talking points, Jun 23., 1966. LBJL. Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵⁵⁴ Talking points, Jun 23., 1966. LBJL. Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵⁵⁵ Talking points, Jun 23., 1966. LBJL. Papers of Francis Bator, box 28.

⁵⁵⁶ NSAM 352 Bridge Building July 8, 1966.

<http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/nsams/nsam352.asp>

extent of Western Europe's actual influence on US policy. Indeed Wilson's and other European allies' calls for a policy towards Eastern Europe had pushed to US to embark upon this at that moment in time.

The Peace Initiative

The US-German Crisis

The American-German relationship was put on the agenda in Washington in September 1966, as the German Chancellor Erhard (CDU/CSU) was about to visit. The Johnson administration planned to launch the tripartite approach to the nuclear problem, and also reassure the Erhard administration of American support of German unification. However, the German-American relationship was perhaps undergoing or was potentially about to undergo some substantial changes in the fall of 1966, at least according to Hughes of State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research.

Hughes speculated if there were a turning point in the German-American relationship on the horizon, and argued that the relationship so far had rested on two principles; on one hand the US had provided Germany security and 'respectability' in exchange for on the other hand, that Germany identified '*its fate with Washington*',⁵⁵⁷ however this was, according to Hughes, about to change. The German 'psychological' and economic recovery, the diminishing Soviet threat, and '*the fact that alternative relationships and new horizons are being offered to the Federal republic*'⁵⁵⁸ not just by de Gaulle, but also by '*other non-French voices ... recommend[ing] a 'Europe first' policy*'⁵⁵⁹ led Hughes to talk about this potential turning point in the American-German relationship.

Although others than de Gaulle offered alternatives to Bonn's close relationship with Washington, de Gaulle was still considered the primary perpetrator to the close American-German relationship, according to INR. De Gaulle's impact in Germany was 'critical' especially if the Germans chose de Gaulle's 'pattern' to reunification.⁵⁶⁰ De Gaulle argued for a European solution to the German problem, indeed, the European détente would eventually overcome the East-West division and thereby create an 'environment' for German reunification. German reunification would therefore not be achieved through reliance on America and Western strength. Although the realization of this environment, according to INR, was not unacceptable to the US 'in principle' it would cut a 'longstanding policy link' between the US and

⁵⁵⁷ INR to Rusk, Sep. 15, 1966, LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 187.

⁵⁵⁸ INR to Rusk, Sep. 15, 1966, LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 187.

⁵⁵⁹ INR to Rusk, Sep. 15, 1966, LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 187.

⁵⁶⁰ INR to Rusk, Sep. 15, 1966, LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 187.

West Germany. Hughes also cited Bonn's activist approach to Eastern and Central Europe, an approach which had '*boomed across the iron curtain*'⁵⁶¹ as a challenge to the American-German relationship. INR concluded that although a 'sharp shift' in the American-German relationship was highly unlikely, the US had to commit itself to a '*consistency in policy, consideration for West Germany's problems, understanding for German national objectives and tactics used to achieve them, consultation about major issues without undue pressures, and forbearance in the recruitment of German support for specifically US interests, aims and policies*'.⁵⁶² INR thus concluded much in line with McGhee's recommendation in the spring 1966, and perhaps more important, INR, which based its analysis on intelligence, apparently regarded the Gaullist threat very much alive and kicking despite de Gaulle's apparent loss of leverage in the Alliance.

INR was not the only branch of government, which talked about a crisis or possible crisis in the US-German relationship. The CIA argued in October 1966 that the state of the relationship with the Germans was at '*a post war low*'⁵⁶³ especially following Chancellor Erhard's failure to negotiate a relief from the offset payments in the trilateral talks that had begun in August 1966. The CIA argued, in accordance with INR, that the Gaullists within Erhard's own political party the CDU were plotting to take over the leadership, which they did, however, CIA also relayed that '*Even pro-US German politicians now maintain that there is a growing divergence between the US and German policies, and point up to the need to improve Bonn's ties with Paris*'.⁵⁶⁴

In the end, Chancellor Erhard failed to counter the domestic criticism, gave up, and the CDU/CSU and FDP coalition lost the elections in November 1966, to the Grand Coalition, led by Kurt Georg Kiesinger (CDU) seconded by Willy Brandt (SPD) as new German foreign minister. Although the literature has claimed that Johnson's tough bargaining style during the tripartite talks in October was the direct cause of the Erhard government's fall, this thesis suggests that German domestic politics was the first and foremost reason as argued in Chapter 3.

The speech

In October 1966 Johnson delivered a speech on America's policies towards the Eastern bloc. In the literature, the speech is regarded as a defining moment in Johnson's European policy. In July 1966, the Policy

⁵⁶¹ INR to Rusk, Sep. 15, 1966, LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 187.

⁵⁶² INR to Rusk, Sep. 15, 1966, LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 187.

⁵⁶³ CIA Intelligence memo, Oct. 29, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 187.

⁵⁶⁴ CIA Intelligence memo, Oct. 29, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Germany, box 187.

Planning Council proposed three ‘*peace initiatives*’⁵⁶⁵ towards Europe to overcome the strains in the relationship between the US and the European allies.⁵⁶⁶ These initiatives, essentially, aimed at manifesting the political bargain, preparing the ground for initiatives that would, among other things, control the European allies’ Eastern European policies and align these policies to US policy ends and – not least – stressing NATO’s instrumentality to the European allies. The ‘peace’ initiatives should be forwarded to Johnson before Prime Minister Wilson’s forthcoming visit.

In line with the Acheson Committee, which had proposed that Johnson held a speech to confirm American support of NATO in the wake of the French withdrawal, the Policy Planning Council of State Department, in complete agreement with EUR, suggested that Johnson should give a speech to ‘*stress the continued need for European unity and Atlantic partnership in moving toward a settlement which would resolve the division of Europe.*’⁵⁶⁷ However, whereas the Acheson Committee was mostly preoccupied with containing Germany and maintaining alliance cohesion, the Council’s motivations for this particular ‘peace initiative’ was mostly to respond to both Eastern and Western Europe. It will be recalled that the British Prime Minister Wilson had called for a collective NATO outreach towards Eastern Europe immediately after the French withdrawal, claiming that de Gaulle’s exit made it necessary and was an opportunity to direct the alliance towards the Eastern Europe (and gain some political consultation), and it appears as if the Council’s aim with the proposal was to announce concurrence with the British (and other European allies’) wishes for an Eastern policy.

The political bargain, namely that in return for the allies’ backing of the integration principle the allies would get political consultation and an Eastern policy, was also inherent in the Council’s line of thinking as it stressed the Atlantic partnership – indeed political consultation – on the matter of a European settlement on the implicit premise that NATO, in fact, remained integrated. Securing the integration principle was among the very reasons why the Council proposed the speech in the first place. The Council also proposed that Johnson launched a ‘doctrinal basis’ upon which future initiatives in the Atlantic alliance towards Eastern Europe could be based, which Johnson did in his speech in October.

Apart from the speech, the Council also proposed that the US, FRG, and the UK should issue a joint declaration ‘*pledging themselves to renewed effort in seeking an East-West non-proliferation treaty ... and indicating that they will not contribute to national proliferation by launching or assisting new national programs*’,⁵⁶⁸ and the early adherence by the remaining 14 NATO allies

⁵⁶⁵ Owen to Rusk, July 25., 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁶⁶ Owen to Rusk, July 25., 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁶⁷ P/S to Rusk, Jul., 25, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁶⁸ P/S to Rusk, Jul., 25, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

was foreshadowed.⁵⁶⁹ The idea behind this non-proliferation scheme was mostly to get the non-proliferation ‘negotiations’ on track again with the Soviet Union. The main obstacle was still the unresolved nuclear position of Germany, and by making the Germans issue such a declaration, it would ‘*elicit a more watertight German non-proliferation commitment*’,⁵⁷⁰ which in effect was the same as the German renounced the right to a national nuclear deterrent and the abolishment of the European clause. The declaration was, in other words, a means for the US to align the European allies to American policy ends as formulated in NSAM 322.⁵⁷¹

The Council also proposed a NATO declaration, in which the allies reaffirmed their ‘*desire to promote peace and stability in Europe*’,⁵⁷² and the Council argued that the NATO declaration should take explicit notice of the recent Warsaw Pact statement, ‘*notably its call for ‘good neighborly relations on the basis of the principles of national independence and sovereignty, equal rights, non-interference in internal affairs and mutual advantage on the basis of peaceful co-existence among states with different social systems’*’.⁵⁷³ The Warsaw Pact statement in effect argued against unification and new demarcation, and promoted the Brezhnev Doctrine. If the NATO declaration took its point of departure in the Warsaw Pact statement it would, according to the Council, ‘dramatize’ the NATO declaration and ‘*enhance its appeal as a peace initiative to US and Western European opinion*’,⁵⁷⁴ however, the basic idea behind the declaration was ‘*to emphasize the role of NATO as an instrument for promoting all-European security*’⁵⁷⁵ and respond the ‘*periodic Soviet proposals and desires in the West for a NATO-Warsaw Pact non-aggression agreement, while avoiding the difficulties involved in trying to negotiate such an agreement*’.⁵⁷⁶ The NATO declaration was therefore, as much about promoting NATO to the European allies as a statement to the Warsaw Pact countries.

The last initiative the Council proposed was the promotion of a concerted Western policy in trade and ‘*contacts with the East*’ via OECD. The reason for this suggestion was both to respond to the many desires in the Western Europe for increased contacts with the Eastern bloc countries, but also to control Western Europe’s bilateral policies towards the East, policies which the European allies conducted ‘*without regard to their political consequences*’⁵⁷⁷ for US policies.

⁵⁶⁹ P/S to Rusk, Jul., 25, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁷⁰ P/S to Rusk, Jul., 25, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁷¹ NSAM 322 of December 1964, see Chapter 5.

⁵⁷² P/S to Rusk, Jul., 25, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁷³ P/S to Rusk, Jul., 25, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁷⁴ P/S to Rusk, Jul., 25, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁷⁵ P/S to Rusk, Jul., 25, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁷⁶ P/S to Rusk, Jul., 25, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁷⁷ P/S to Rusk, Jul., 25, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

The Council's proposal and motivations for them can be seen as a means to sustain and maintain US leadership of the Alliance and protection of US unilateralism. Indeed, the Council wanted Johnson to respond to developments in Europe; the WP declaration and the numerous Western European calls for a policy towards the Eastern bloc, by realigning the Western European policy and outlook to American policy ends, such as the suggested non-proliferation declaration and the proposal for a concerted OECD policy reflected.

Furthermore, by bringing it to attention to the European allies, that NATO was the primary instrument for any European peace settlement, the Council gave Johnson a recipe for how to control the Western European détente, and at the same time promote and preserve American unilateralism in foreign policy. The American objective to control the allies' Eastern policies via NATO was a defensive measure to protect the American freedom of action in foreign policy and the national interests the foreign policy objectives reflected against Western Europe. The same can be said of most of the proposals that served to contain the European allies from having bilateral or 'outside' the treaty framework relations with the Soviet Union. Indeed, the Council's preoccupation with the immediate and future Warsaw Pact proposals for a European settlement, and the launch of NATO as the exclusive vehicle for contact with the Warsaw pact on the subject of a European settlement was designed to prevent Western European bilateralism.

At the same time the Council's deliberations revealed exactly how reactive America's détente policy was, indeed, the Council forecasted that the British would be delighted with these initiatives, especially the NATO declaration, since the UK already had proposed a draft for an East-West declaration. However, the Council's proposed NATO declaration would avoid, contrary to the British proposal, '*a pitfall of East-West negotiation on language. Such a negotiation would almost certainly result in communist efforts to promote divisive issue*',⁵⁷⁸ which in the end, according to the Council, would generate heat in the Western alliance. The Council, in other words, completely overruled the British approach to the entire subject matter, namely that it should be a common East-West endeavor, and instead promoted an exclusive Western declaration. This on the other hand reflects upon the American unilateralist approach, which was also promoted as a defensive measure to protect the American interests.

If Western Europe had not called for an initiative towards Eastern Europe, and indeed, had not already been exchanging goods and culture across the Iron Curtain, '*without regard for their political consequences*',⁵⁷⁹ the subsequent American Bridge Building policy had probably not seen the

⁵⁷⁸ P/S to Rusk, Jul., 25, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁷⁹ P/S to Rusk, Jul., 25, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

day in 1966, and therefore it is meaningful to talk about a substantial Western European push for a détente.

Johnson gave the speech in October, 1966 before the National Conference of Editorial Writers in New York. The speech was to a large extent a response to the European allies and the speech reflected the different means the administration had developed to overcome the NATO crisis.

Johnson's statement that it was an American purpose '*to help the people of Europe to achieve together ... a continent in which alliances do not confront each other in bitter hostility, but instead provide a framework in which West and East can act together in order to assure the security of all*'⁵⁸⁰, is often regarded as the official declaration of providing a security framework to the American détente effort, and also often considered a largely American invention.⁵⁸¹ This view fails to recognize the numerous initiatives from the European allies in the spring of 1966 in the North Atlantic Council and NATO that all pointed towards this end, and the aforementioned Warsaw Pact declaration, which also pointed towards this end. In fact, it may be argued that Johnson merely responded to Western European proposals with this particular statement on the purpose of the alliance.

In actuality, in June 1966, the British had presented the proposal in the North Atlantic Council on a declaration on '*European security and cooperation*'⁵⁸² that was the first of two British proposals, which they intended should be adopted by '*East and West European countries [to] improve the atmosphere in Europe*'.⁵⁸³ The British proposal was not adopted mostly because the US '*expressed concern that it concentrated on Europe so much that it seemed to exclude participation by the US*'.⁵⁸⁴ In May, 1966, the Danes had proposed that NATO should approach the Warsaw Pact and call for a European security conference, an initiative which was rejected as 'premature' by the US,⁵⁸⁵ and in September, 1966, at a Political Advisors meeting in NATO, the Belgians proposed the establishment of a '*permanent body, composed of an equal number of representatives from East and West, in which both sides could exchange views*'.⁵⁸⁶ There were, in other words, in 1966 several Western European pushes for establishing the very

⁵⁸⁰ Johnson speech

⁵⁸¹ Kieninger unpublished book manuscript

⁵⁸² INR to Rusk, Dec., 2, 1966. Annex. NARA, RG 59, Bureau of European Affairs, lot file 70D332, box 1.

⁵⁸³ INR to Rusk, Dec., 2, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Bureau of European Affairs, lot file 70D332, box 1. In 1967 the British tabled another proposal Memcon, Aug. 16, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council, Lot file 72D139, box 301.

⁵⁸⁴ INR to Rusk, Dec., 2, 1966. Annex NARA, RG 59, Bureau of European Affairs, lot file 70D332, box 1.

⁵⁸⁵ INR to Rusk, Dec., 2, 1966. Annex NARA, RG 59, Bureau of European Affairs, lot file 70D332, box 1.

⁵⁸⁶ INR to Rusk, Dec., 2, 1966. Annex NARA, RG 59, Bureau of European Affairs, lot file 70D332, box 1.

'framework in which West and East can act together' that Johnson declared was one purpose of NATO in his speech in October, 1966. An East-West framework which until then had been rejected by the administration on different grounds such as the exclusion of the US and that an East-West endeavor was an invitation to the Eastern bloc to start raising divisive issues and thereby cause friction in the Western alliance.⁵⁸⁷ Instead, the Johnson administration had sought to replace the Europeans' proposal for the establishment of an East-West concept with a one-sided Western construction that would issue declarations.

In the speech Johnson also committed the US to the political bargain and the Acheson Committee's *détente* and deterrent formula, when he declared that NATO must be kept strong and *'must become a forum for increasingly close consultations. These should cover the full range of joint concerns – from East-West relations to crisis management'*.⁵⁸⁸ Johnson also declared, in line with the European allies' wishes, that the division of Europe must be settled, and argued *'that our task is to achieve reconciliation with the East – a shift from the narrow concept of coexistence to the broader vision of peaceful engagement'*,⁵⁸⁹ and announced a renewed effort to build bridges towards the Eastern bloc, and added about NATO's instrumentality that *'agreement on a broad policy to this end, therefore, should be sought in existing Atlantic organs. The principles which should govern East West relations are now being discussed on the North Atlantic Council'*.⁵⁹⁰ Furthermore, Johnson also spoke about the steps which should be taken in OECD.

Johnson took 'explicit notice' about the recent Warsaw Pact declaration, as the Policy Planning Council had recommended, Johnson declared that *'Hand-in-hand with these steps to increase East-West ties must go measures to remove territorial and border issues'*⁵⁹¹ a statement, which was also addressed to West Germany. Indeed, Johnson announced a new policy for the unification of Germany. Contrary to earlier assumptions Johnson now claimed that an improvement in the European environment was the precondition for a German unification. The possible crisis in US-German relations was, in other words, defused, mostly by toppling the Gaullist alternative to a German unification.

⁵⁸⁷ P/S to Rusk, Jul., 25, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁵⁸⁸ Lyndon B. Johnson: "remarks in New York City Before the National Conference of Editorial Writers", October 7, 1966. Online by Gerhardmfgngnl

⁵⁸⁹ Lyndon B. Johnson: "remarks in New York City Before the National Conference of Editorial Writers", October 7, 1966. Online by Gerhardmfgngnl

⁵⁹⁰ Lyndon B. Johnson: "remarks in New York City Before the National Conference of Editorial Writers", October 7, 1966. Online by Gerhardmfgngnl

⁵⁹¹ Lyndon B. Johnson: "remarks in New York City Before the National Conference of Editorial Writers", October 7, 1966. Online by Gerhardmfgngnl

Towards the Future of the Alliance

Tripartite Talks and the Future of the Alliance

The State Department had continuously argued for tripartism as a solution to the outstanding nuclear problem in the alliance. However, in the fall of 1966 Johnson expanded the area for tripartite negotiations to other areas than the nuclear question as a response to the critical financial situation Germany and Great Britain was in. Germany had difficulties with meeting the offset agreements, and the UK had difficulties with financing their troops in Germany, and threatened to withdraw them. Bator warned Johnson in August, 1966, that at the end of the day the situation threatened to unravel the alliance.⁵⁹² The solution to this possible disintegration was the concept of tripartite talks, which aimed at getting the Germans to pay according to the offset agreement, and make the British keep their troops in Germany. Johnson largely succeeded in this endeavor.⁵⁹³

Tripartism as a format for negotiations sparked Belgian criticism. In October, 1966, shortly before the tripartite talks on the financial problems were scheduled to begin, the Belgian ambassador conveyed a formal protest against these talks. According to Leddy of State Department's European desk, the Belgian foreign minister Pierre Harmel had no objections to tripartite talks on subjects on 'purely' financial and economic problems, however, the Belgians were '*violently opposed to the consideration of related military and security questions*',⁵⁹⁴ which Harmel feared presaged the establishment of a 'directorate' within NATO. Leddy argued that Rusk needed to interfere in the situation before it escalated, and claimed that Harmel's accusations was completely unfounded.⁵⁹⁵ In Leddy's line of thinking, the very temporality of the tripartite talks suggested that it would not be a directorate, although he recognized the financial questions would touch upon questions of troop levels and threat perceptions.⁵⁹⁶ Indeed, Johnson wrote Wilson in October, that he wanted to discuss the 'entire range of relevant questions' including 'the nature of the threat' and strategy at the upcoming tripartite talks.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁹² Bator to Johnson, August 23, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 197; *ibid.* 198.

⁵⁹³ Schwartz (2003) chapter ljhv.

⁵⁹⁴ Leddy to Rusk, Oct. 12, 1966. NARA, RG 59, DEF 4 NATO 10/14/66—DEF 4 NATO 6/23/1966, box 1568.

⁵⁹⁵ Leddy to Rusk, Oct. 12, 1966. NARA, RG 59, DEF 4 NATO 10/14/66—DEF 4 NATO 6/23/1966, box 1568.

⁵⁹⁶ Leddy to Rusk, Oct. 12, 1966. NARA, RG 59, DEF 4 NATO 10/14/66—DEF 4 NATO 6/23/1966, box 1568.

⁵⁹⁷ Johnson to Wilson, undated, FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 208.

Harmel reissued his criticism of the tripartite talks ‘in length’ to the American ambassador to Belgium Knight, later in the same month.⁵⁹⁸ Harmel criticized the tripartite talks on three grounds, namely that the talks would create a precedent that future problems of the alliance would be settled by these three major powers (which the Council actually had proposed) thus excluding the remaining allies from influence on alliance matters. Secondly, that tripartism enhanced the status of Germany and therefore jeopardized the détente effort, and lastly, that the very rehabilitation of Germany raised fears in Belgium of a resurgent Germany. Although Harmel recognized that the current arrangement was borne out of urgent financial problems, Harmel argued that these problems moved into broader issues of strategy, ‘evaluation of menace’, and the relations of the West with the Eastern states. Harmel, therefore, concluded that the tripartite talks should immediately be brought into the framework of the 14 rather than continue in the tripartite forum.⁵⁹⁹ Harmel’s criticism resonated throughout the alliance, and John McCloy, Johnson’s representative to the trilateral talks, was sent on a firefighting mission among the allies in late October 1966.⁶⁰⁰

Harmel’s criticism of tripartism was accompanied by the proposal to study ‘certain fundamental questions’ regarding NATO’s future.⁶⁰¹ At a meeting in Washington in early October 1966, Harmel raised ‘*the need to start projecting the alliance’s future in areas other than military.*’,⁶⁰² and now the time was ripe with de Gaulle’s withdrawal, according to Harmel, ‘*to designate a la 1957 a three or four ‘wise men’ exercise*’,⁶⁰³ at the upcoming December 1966 NATO ministerial meeting. Leddy responded favorably to Harmel’s proposal, admitting that up until then the alliance, i.e., the US, had been preoccupied with preserving the alliance instead of considering ‘*what we want in the future*’.⁶⁰⁴ Harmel suggested that the ‘fundamental questions’ that should be studied was ‘*strategy, revision, philosophy of the alliance, East-West relations, and Europe-US relations.*’⁶⁰⁵

⁵⁹⁸ Knight to Rusk et al., ‘Harmel on tripartite talks and Germany’ Oct 28, 1966.

NARA, RG 59, DEF 4 NATO 10/14/66—DEF 4 NATO 6/23/1966, box 1568.

⁵⁹⁹ Knight to Rusk et al., ‘Harmel on tripartite talks and Germany’ Oct 28, 1966.

NARA, RG 59, DEF 4 NATO 10/14/66—DEF 4 NATO 6/23/1966, box 1568.

⁶⁰⁰ Cleveland to Rusk, Oct. 22, 1966. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 213.

⁶⁰¹ Knight to Rusk et al., ‘Harmel’s views on general state of the alliance’, Oct 28, 1966.

NARA, RG 59, DEF 4 NATO 10/14/66—DEF 4 NATO 6/23/1966, box 1568.

⁶⁰² Memcon Harmel and Leddy et al., Oct. 10, 1966. NARA, RG 59, DEF 4 NATO 10/14/66—DEF 4 NATO 6/23/1966, box 1568.

⁶⁰³ Memcon Harmel and Leddy et al., Oct. 10, 1966. NARA, RG 59, DEF 4 NATO 10/14/66—DEF 4 NATO 6/23/1966, box 1568.

⁶⁰⁴ Memcon Harmel and Leddy et al., Oct. 10, 1966. NARA, RG 59, DEF 4 NATO 10/14/66—DEF 4 NATO 6/23/1966, box 1568.

⁶⁰⁵ Knight to Rusk et al., ‘Harmel’s views on general state of the alliance’, Oct 28, 1966. NARA, RG 59, DEF 4 NATO 10/14/66—DEF 4 NATO 6/23/1966, box 1568.

State Department's response to Harmel's proposal was positive, and the reasons for the department's backing were quite in line with the hitherto thinking on *why* the US should respond favorably to Western Europe. In an instruction to NATO capitals, Rusk declared that as the result of 'primarily' Harmel's initiative, State Department supported that at the December NATO ministerial meeting '*a major study on the future of the alliance*'⁶⁰⁶ should be commissioned, because '*US like many European countries is concerned with need to articulate up-to-date role for the Alliance; to assure its continued relevance to improved East-West relations in line with the President's October 7 speech [sic]; and, against background of French withdrawal and approach of 1969, to assure continued governmental and public understanding and support for goals of Western cohesion and deterrent strength of Alliance*'.⁶⁰⁷ The US aim with the Harmel study was, in other words, to 'assure' the continued Western European backing of the political bargain, or put in other words, one American objective with the Harmel study was the formalization of the European allies' adherence to the principle of integration at the price of détente with the Eastern bloc. Thus, State Department's long held wish to force the European allies to take a stand on the integration principle appeared to be within reach.⁶⁰⁸

State Department made clear that the study should be exclusively on the '*political and non-military side of NATO*',⁶⁰⁹ as Harmel had argued in October, and Rusk tentatively suggested a study on how the alliance could improve East-West relations, and thereby continue the already existing work on European security and the German problem, the '*general Atlantic and European relations*', and the '*reevaluation of the alliance machinery*'.⁶¹⁰ In its totality, this was much in line with the Belgian thinking, and the different European calls for a reform of NATO.

In a paper presented at a December 1966 NSC meeting, the Department of State argued, among other things, that the US' aim at the upcoming NATO ministerial meeting was to bring home to the allies, that the alliance had recovered from the French 'attack' and that the alliance would continue to cooperate with the French, as long it did not compromise the alliance's interests. Furthermore, the US aimed at making it clear to the allies that the Soviet threat called for an 'effective' NATO, that a détente demanded a 'strong NATO', and that the US

⁶⁰⁶ Rusk to NATO capitals, Nov. 26, 1966. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 221.

⁶⁰⁷ Rusk to NATO capitals, Nov. 26, 1966. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 221.

⁶⁰⁸ See chapter 6 on Draft NSAMs.

⁶⁰⁹ Rusk to NATO capitals, Nov. 26, 1966. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 221.

⁶¹⁰ Rusk to NATO capitals, Nov. 26, 1966. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 221.

supported the Harmel study.⁶¹¹ Among the more ‘principal’ topics was the general US aim ‘*to keep the organization very much in the East-West picture as a major instrument for coordinating Western policies and, where appropriate, specific actions*’.⁶¹² Although the department also argued in the paper that some allies were reluctant to use NATO as an instrument because they feared it would portray a certain Western rigidity, the department argued that a paper to study the matter was likely to be adopted.⁶¹³ At the NSC meeting Johnson concurred with the department’s paper, however, the primary topic at the meeting was how to bring home to the reluctant European allies that the Johnson administration was losing domestic support of NATO. The Mansfield Resolution had called for substantial troop reductions in Europe, and the tripartite talks had not resulted in any substantial contributions to the alliance from either Germany or Great Britain.

McNamara also prepared to finally end the ‘talk of the Multilateral Force’ by bringing home the Nuclear Planning Group, which, according to McNamara, would tie Germany with the US and the UK.⁶¹⁴

The Belgian proposal to the Harmel study did not receive much attention at the NSC meeting, despite it being on the agenda at the upcoming ministerial meeting; this possibly reflected that the administration, in fact, had adopted a formal policy towards the alliance after the many deliberations since the French withdrawal in March 1966.

A policy which aimed at maintain the fundamental principles of the alliance while directing it at a policy towards the Eastern bloc, because the alliance served the purpose of balancing Western Europe, controlling Western Europe’s policies, ultimately to protect America’s foreign policy from interference from Western Europe, i.e., maintain American protective unilateralism. Essentially this was a policy that was motivated by a rejection of the European reason of state, and as such a policy of detachment.

Questioning the raison of NATO’s political raison d’être

Although the idea that NATO had a certain instrumentality for improving the relationship between East and West, and the US had made a bargain with the European allies that there should be an increased consultation on relations towards the Eastern bloc in NATO and thereby give NATO a political raison d’être, INR questioned this

⁶¹¹ State to NSC, dec. 10, 1966. LBJL, NSC meeting files, box 2. State’s paper as presented at the NSC meeting was a draft of the Scope Paper in FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 223 drafted by Leddy et.al.

⁶¹² State to NSC, dec. 10, 1966. LBJL, NSC meeting files, box 2.

⁶¹³ State to NSC, dec. 10, 1966. LBJL, NSC meeting files, box 2.

⁶¹⁴ State to NSC, dec. 10, 1966. LBJL, NSC meeting files, box 2.

very instrumentality shortly before the NATO ministerial meeting. Western Europe *'In their response to this challenge [de Gaulle], the other members have not only stressed that NATO's integrated military organization is essential to the security of its members, but they have also tried to emphasize NATO's role as a centre for political consultation on East-West relations'*.⁶¹⁵ As a token of this, INR cited the British, Danish, and Belgian initiatives that had been put forward during the spring and summer of 1966. Interestingly though, INR did not mention Harmel's proposal.

INR argued however, that NATO was not a 'judicial entity' and nobody, including the European allies, wanted it to turn into such an entity, NATO, according to INR, was therefore, as an *'institution not fitted for the role of an 'architect' of détente'*.⁶¹⁶ The question is, however, exactly what INR meant by 'judicial entity'? INR most likely believed a judicial entity was a truly multilateral institution with common principles and rules for decision-making. In that sense, INR's rejection of the establishment of a judicial entity was the same as a complete rejection of a détente anchored in a multilateral institution and subsequent a complete rejection of giving up any unilateralism in America's détente policies and role as the 'architect' of the détente. Neither would the European allies according to INR's estimate. In a classic INR perspective, the paper finished with concluding that a 'habit of consultation' had significant value, not only for the members to be kept informed but also because during periods of reduced tension *'centrifugal tendencies in the Alliance are apt to gather strength'*,⁶¹⁷ consultation was *'a significant counterweight to these tendencies'*.⁶¹⁸

The CIA, however, worried that the future of the alliance was not necessarily bright. In an estimate of the upcoming ministerial meeting, the CIA argued that although the alliance had survived the first stage after the French withdrawal, de Gaulle had had a certain impact. Indeed, the CIA argued that there was *'a widespread questioning of whether a simple prolongation of existing arrangements is a viable long term solution to the problem of European and Atlantic security'*.⁶¹⁹

Brief Conclusions

In general, the period 1965-1966 saw the beginning and blossoming of a movement from a strictly French challenge to American unilateralism in the alliance to an actual Western European challenge to the *modus vivendi* of the alliance and more broadly the transatlantic relationship. The first

⁶¹⁵ INR to Rusk, dec. 2, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁶¹⁶ INR to Rusk, dec. 2, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁶¹⁷ INR to Rusk, dec. 2, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁶¹⁸ INR to Rusk, dec. 2, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council box 313.

⁶¹⁹ CIA dec. 9, 1966. LBJL, Files of Walt Rostow, box 15.

significant expression of this was the German calls for a common Western approach towards the German reunification question raised at the March 1965 APAG meeting.

However, after the French withdrawal from NATO's integrated command in March, 1966, the European allies moved quickly to push for more political consultation in the Alliance and less American unilateralism, and move the Western alliance towards a *détente* with the Eastern bloc. Especially the British and the Belgians succeeded with pushing the US towards the *détente* and more political consultation. It might even be possible to talk about a beginning of a certain Europeanization of the alliance's foreign and security policy.

The White House and the Department of State worried that the French withdrawal would cast the alliance into further disintegration, and feared that other allies would reject the principle of integration, as de Gaulle had, the very heart of NATO. Therefore, to preserve the military integration the administration led by the Department of State attempted to strike a bargain. In return for backing of the principle of integration the European allies would get political consultation and an effort to move towards normalization of East-West relations. The different responses to the NATO crisis pointed towards an American effort to maintain the alliance in its original form, with its original purpose. Indeed, in the years 1965-1966 the different foreign policy making branches claimed that NATO's primary purpose was to balance Western Europe, and that the principle of integration was the only thing that stood between the current balance (however un-balanced Western Europe was) and a return to the pre-war European reason of state. The administration's preoccupation with preserving integration, and the Acheson Committee's claim that NATO ultimately served to manage the German-Soviet relationship was expressions of this. This ultimately reflects that the administration upheld this traditional perception of Western Europe.

The Acheson Committee proposed a *détente* and deterrence formula in their report. The committee agreed in June 1966 that to maintain alliance cohesion, i.e., counter a rejection of the integration principle among the European allies, and contain the European allies' Eastern policies the alliance should move into the political area and promote better relations with the East while at the same time maintain a strong, and therefore integrated, deterrent. Contrary to the Belgian proposal of November 1966, the American formula of *détente* and deterrence was proposed as a means to control the allies more than a means to overcome the Cold War. Nonetheless there was during 1965-1966 a substantial Western European push towards a *détente*.

There were only a few diversions from this. Doherty of the Policy Planning Council promoted Europeanism, and the Bureau of

Intelligence and Research questioned whether NATO could be used to devise a détente at all. In actuality, this refusal reflected that INR considered the US to be the architect of détente and a complete rejection of any multilateral détente policy.

If Johnson's speech of October 7 1966 is seen in connection with the foregoing developments in the transatlantic relationship, Johnson mostly responded to this in his speech. Indeed, Johnson reiterated the political bargain, and moved the alliance towards normalization with the East, although it became a one-sided affair contrary to the European allies' proposals in the spring 1966.

The policy towards the Alliance the administration arrived at by the fall of 1966 was ultimately a policy of detachment. Based on the rejection of the European reason of state, the administration moved the alliance towards a détente and deterrence to control the allies' policies and to protect the American unilateralism in foreign policy – especially protect America's policy towards the Soviet Union, as the Policy Planning Council proposed.

Tripartism was suggested by Wilson; however the administration saw it as a means to solve concrete financial problems and bring the UK and FRG closer together and thereby counter alliance disintegration. However, one spillover effect from the tripartite talks was the Belgian proposal for the Harmel study. The State Department's immediate response to the Belgian proposal was to see it as an opportunity to manifesting and formalizing the political bargain.

In general, the literature on the Transatlantic relationship and the beyond Vietnam literature neglects to recognize this substantial Western European impact on America and indeed, on America's détente policy. Thus, when Schwartz argues that Johnson saw de Gaulle's withdrawal as opportunity to regroup and reform the alliance behind American leadership, Schwartz neglects to see this important and indeed, dynamic Western European influence on the Johnson administration's détente policy and the 'regrouping' of the alliance. The British and the Belgians, in fact, saw the French withdrawal as an opportunity to reform the alliance and move it to a détente with the East.

During 1965 and 1966 the question of NATO's role in out of treaty area questions also arrived on the agenda. The administration in general sought to get the allies' support for the War in Vietnam, and there were different voices that argued for increased political consultation in these matters to obtain the European allies backing.

During 1965 and 1966, the German question manifested itself on the political agenda in Washington. However, the prevailing line of thinking was that the German problem was somewhat unsolvable under the present circumstances, and the most important element in America's policy towards West Germany was to counter a new German

assertiveness and maintain American control and close relations with Germany. Although Johnson's October 7, 1966 speech launched a new way for German unification, German assertiveness continued to be an issue in Washington.

Chapter 7 The Future of the Alliance, 1966-1968

Introduction

The final years of Johnson's Presidency was used by the administration to consolidate the Atlantic alliance, the principles it had been built on, and cement the American protective unilateralism.

At the December, 1966, Ministerial meeting in Paris, the Alliance had resolved to undertake the Harmel study on the future of the alliance. The French withdrawal from NATO's integrated command had sparked British and Belgian demands for expanded political consultation in the alliance, a reform of the alliance with an eye to a détente with the Eastern bloc, and a solution to the nuclear question in the alliance.⁶²⁰ The Johnson administration supported the idea to undertake a study of NATO's future from the beginning, as the Belgian proposal was much in line with the Acheson Committee's formula for maintaining alliance cohesion and US control with the allies' bilateral Eastern policies, thus reflecting one of the Johnson administration's objectives with the Harmel exercise, namely to control the allies' policies and maintain American leadership of the alliance, which was manifested in the American unilateralism. In many ways this pattern would repeat itself during the CSCE negotiations in Geneva and Helsinki, 1973-1975. However, the administration saw a clear need to take control with the question of NATO's defensive posture and to protect the integrated deterrent, thus, Kohler, the Deputy under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, was put in charge of subgroup 2, which studied NATO's defensive posture.

The administration also supported the Harmel study because it was an opportunity to raise the sensitive and problematic matter of the European allies' relations with and possible role to play in the out of treaty areas – most notably the Middle East and Vietnam. Although the US had campaigned for political backing to the war in Vietnam among the allies throughout the first half of the 1960s, none, except a reluctant West Germany, had met the American wishes. Instead by the end of 1966, the American intervention in Vietnam was cited among the European allies as a threat to alliance-cohesion.

A new trend in German foreign policy, namely West German 'assertiveness' was put on the agenda as the Grand Coalition entered Bonn in December 1966. The administration resolved to try to 'turn' this new assertiveness into another Atlantic framework, namely the

⁶²⁰ See Chapter 7.

nonproliferation scheme, since the existing frameworks in Europe and the Atlantic appeared too strained to actually handle the new German assertiveness. The nonproliferation scheme, which the Johnson administration estimated was within reach in late 1966, also posed a problem for America in terms of the European clause that was still a problem. The Germans, contrary to the British, insisted that a nonproliferation treaty did not bar Europe from creating an independent, collective nuclear force, which in American optics threatened the US unilateralism in nuclear affairs in the Western alliance, and the establishment of an independent nuclear force in Europe would necessitate a complete American drawback from Europe – a line of thinking which reflected the policy of detachment in the nuclear field. In the end, the administration succeeded with an interpretation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty's Article 2 that established that the treaty did not rule out the so-called successor state principle.

The Soviet clamp down in Prague in August, 1968, shook the alliance; however, the Johnson administration in complete departmental agreement also saw the Soviet invasion as an opportunity to 'cement' the alliance further. The question was, whether or not the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia actually served to reconcile the Atlantic alliance?

The December 1966 Ministerial Meeting

Although the Belgian foreign minister Pierre Harmel had spoken of his preference for considering the problems that de Gaulle's withdrawal from the integrated command presented to the alliance in its entirety, Harmel did not propose the study to the Americans until November 21, 1966.⁶²¹ By that time the practical issues relating to the French withdrawal had been solved, indeed, the move of NATO facilities (from France) to Belgian territory was decided upon. This was probably also a reason for the timing of Harmel's proposition, as the move of NATO facilities to Belgium had sparked domestic debate about the apparent paradox between the Belgian adherence to NATO, solidified by the Belgian government's accept of the move, and the same government's desire for détente.⁶²² However, as Harmel had already stressed in May, 1966, that there was a need to look at the NATO crisis in its entirety and subsequently proposed a study like the wise men's report at a meeting in October, 1966, with Leddy of State Department's European desk, the

⁶²¹ Memcon Harmel & Johnson et.al., May 20, 1966. FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XIII, Western European region, doc. 167.

⁶²² Haftendorn (1996), p. 321; bozo (1998), p. 349.

Belgian domestic factor can mostly explain the timing of the proposal.⁶²³ Belgium like Great Britain and Germany, as discussed in chapter 6, saw the French withdrawal as an opportunity to move the alliance to a reform with an eye to a détente with the Eastern bloc.

When Harmel first laid out his proposal for the State Department in October, 1966, he stressed that focus of the study should be on the future, rather than the past, and Harmel declared his ‘satisfaction’ with Johnson’s focus on Atlantic partnership in the October 7 speech.⁶²⁴ The State Department’s immediate interpretation of Harmel’s proposal was, that Harmel sought to counter the widespread misunderstanding in Western Europe and elsewhere that the remaining 14 alliance members were only occupied with salvaging as much as possible of the ‘old outfit’ instead of turning the alliance on to the future. At the same time, the department believed Harmel sought to increase the cohesion and ‘forward movement’ in the alliance before 1969, when it was possible for the allies to withdraw from the alliance.⁶²⁵ Harmel scouted his proposal in October, 1966, for a study of the future of the alliance with Rusk and Leddy of State Department, as discussed in Chapter 6.⁶²⁶

Bozo claims that US diplomacy set out to use the Harmel exercise ‘*to the best of US and NATO interests*’, and that Washington’s aim was ‘*first and foremost to achieve consensus in the Alliance on East-West relations*’ after de Gaulle’s withdrawal and the subsequent divergence of views among the European allies on the relations with the Eastern bloc.⁶²⁷ There were, according to Bozo, a struggle between the Gaullist and American conceptions of détente, a struggle which took place during the Harmel exercise, and the Harmel report was the final showdown between de Gaulle’s Europeanism and America’s Atlanticism.⁶²⁸ Therefore it was ‘key’ for the Johnson administration to maintain French participation in the Harmel study to ‘neutralize’ Gaullist thinking.⁶²⁹ The French therefore continuously found themselves in a dilemma during the Harmel exercise. In the French view the alliance appeared to have accepted the Gaullist claim that a détente with the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc were viable and possible, but the French clearly saw the entire exercise as a means for America to renew their leadership in Western Europe.⁶³⁰

⁶²³ Memcon Harmel & Johnson et.al., May 20, 1966. FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XIII, Western European region, doc. 167; Memcon Harmel & Leddy et.al., Oct. 10, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Defense, DEF 4 NATO, box 1568.

⁶²⁴ Knight to Rusk, Oct. 28, 1966. NARA, RG 59, Defense, DEF 4 NATO, box 1568.

⁶²⁵ State to Brussels et.al. Oct. 28., 1966. NARA, RG 59, Defense, DEF 4 NATO, box 1568.

⁶²⁶ Memo to Rostow, Oct. 2, 1967. LBJL, Papers of Walt Rostow, box 16.

⁶²⁷ Bozo (1998), p. 350.

⁶²⁸ Bozo (1998).

⁶²⁹ Bozo (1998), p. 350.

⁶³⁰ Bozo (1998), p. 351.

While not disagreeing with this argument, the Harmel study was first and foremost about maintaining the American leadership of the alliance and of alliance matters in light of the challenge from de Gaulle and the calls for a reform from the British and the Belgians. Indeed, the US delegation largely sought to maintain as much of the old structure as possible because the perception of the purpose of the alliance and ultimately the perception of the European allies had not changed, as discussed in the previous chapters. The Harmel study was, in other words, used by the administration to reinforce the integration principle, NATO's instrumentality to American foreign policy ends and as a defensive measure to protect American national interests and freedom of action in foreign policy. Whereas the immediate aim was to bring home to the allies that the NATO crisis sparked by de Gaulle's withdrawal was, in fact, over.

These objectives were evident in EUR's position paper of December, 1966, in which EUR put forward that the US recognized the need to '*articulate an up-to-date role for the Alliance*',⁶³¹ however, the main objectives were '*to assure its [the alliance] continued relevance to efforts to improve East-West relations consistent with the President's October 7 speech; and to assure continued governmental and public support for the goals of Western cohesion and the Alliance's deterrent strength*'.⁶³² EUR's formal position was, in other words, completely in line with the deliberations of the Acheson Committee and a reiteration of the political bargain,⁶³³ and as such the Harmel exercise was a means to cement the political bargain and force the European allies to adhere to the bearing principles of the alliance.

The Ministerial meeting in December was however, important for other reasons than the adoption of the Harmel study, probably because the administration already had adopted the deterrence and détente formula with the Acheson Committee's report. The CIA argued that the December, 1966, ministerial meeting was of '*unusual importance to the future of the alliance*'⁶³⁴ citing the establishment of McNamara's Nuclear Planning Group (NPG), the future military 'requirements' of the alliance, and the alliance's role in East-West matters as tokens of the unusualness. The CIA also touched upon the political role of NATO, and argued that the reason for the movement from the strictly military role to a political role of NATO was a convergence of circumstances; the studies of the threat to NATO, NATO's force levels, and NATO's economy, and the rapid approach of 1969 all contributed to '*stimulate a searching look at the future role of NATO*'.⁶³⁵ Although the CIA touched upon the Harmel study the

⁶³¹ EUR position paper, Dec. 6, 1966. LBJL, NSF, IMTF, box 35.

⁶³² EUR position paper, Dec. 6, 1966. LBJL, NSF, IMTF, box 35.

⁶³³ See Chapter 6.

⁶³⁴ CIA, Dec. 9, 1966. LBJL, Papers of Walt Rostow, box 15.

⁶³⁵ CIA, Dec. 9, 1966. LBJL, Papers of Walt Rostow, box 15.

agency was in the dark as to what 'direction' the Harmel study would take.

The CIA also estimated that NATO already had reoriented itself into the new political ground by entering a '*major political area, that of assuming a greater role in furthering the East-West rapprochement*'⁶³⁶ at the June, 1966, ministerial meeting when the allies adopted a resolution that called for NATO acting as a '*clearing house and coordinating point for East-West contacts*'.⁶³⁷ This work was also fast tracking as NATO's committee of Political Advisors had been given the assignment, promoted by the State Department, to summarize the current contacts of each member state with the communist countries.

As to the future of the alliance the agency presented a somewhat bleak picture, which had de Gaulle as its point of departure. The CIA argued that de Gaulle had had an impact on the European allies, and there was a 'widespread questioning' of whether the alliance could continue as usual and still present a long term solution to European and Atlantic security. Even worse, though, de Gaulle's withdrawal had reinforced the beliefs among some European member states that '*there is no immediate military threat to Western Europe. He has aggravated the existing imbalance between European and US power in the alliance and has aroused increased concern over US hegemony ... Finally, he has encouraged an uncoordinated and perhaps dangerously competitive drive to further the East-West détente in Europe.*'⁶³⁸ Although these problems, according to the agency, had been on the horizon for some time, another challenge was that the circumstances for providing the 'best' solutions to these problems were hardly the best. The US intervention in Vietnam remained '*a major impediment to the exercise of US leadership*' in the alliance.

In the end, the US proposed that the Harmel exercise should have a separate study of how the alliance should tackle the problems in out of treaty areas as a way to overcome this impediment, which the CIA identified. Furthermore, no other governments in Western Europe, including the British, at least according to the CIA, had the same level of authority in Western Europe as de Gaulle. Thus, the CIA's estimates underlined the necessity for bringing the European allies' Eastern policies in line and stress the need for a credible deterrent to the European allies. These different aspects would become part of the Harmel exercise, which the allies adopted after minor debate at the December, 1966, ministerial meeting.

⁶³⁶ CIA, Dec. 9, 1966. LBJL, Papers of Walt Rostow, box 15.

⁶³⁷ CIA, Dec. 9, 1966. LBJL, Papers of Walt Rostow, box 15.

⁶³⁸ CIA, Dec. 9, 1966. LBJL, Papers of Walt Rostow, box 15.

The Future of the Alliance Relations

Conferring Equality?

Although the Harmel study had got on the way with the formal adoption in December, 1966, and the McNamara's Nuclear Planning Group was formally established as well, the Western European realignments emerged more fully than before. The Johnson administration set out to discuss the future of the transatlantic relations at a NSC meeting in May, 1967.⁶³⁹ The Department of State had composed a paper for the meeting, in which the department argued that now the time had come to look beyond the immediate problems for which the outlooks were 'reasonably good',⁶⁴⁰ instead the administration should prepare for the future. The Department of State argued in the paper that as the immediate strains in the wake of the French withdrawal in the Alliance were out of the way, the climate between Western Europe and the US was about to improve. However, the administration should prepare itself for a far more assertive Western Europe, which would take distinct Western European approaches to certain problems in contrast to earlier times, when Western Europe was content to follow the US.⁶⁴¹ The department apparently announced to the rest of the administration that the time of a complete Western European backed American unilateralism in NATO was over. This sparked the rather harsh remarks about Europeans. Europeans were, in a cross departmental concurrence, selfish and difficult to satisfy.⁶⁴²

In contrast to the CIA's assessment of December, 1966, the State Department regarded the Western European assertiveness a healthy trend and argued it was not based on the old-fashioned European nationalism, but rather it stemmed from '*the European unification movement fed by increasing European economic strength*'⁶⁴³ and there was a '*growing desire for a European 'voice', for achieving parity with the United States in decision-making which more and more Europeans recognize cannot be approached, much less achieved, without a far greater degree of European integration*',⁶⁴⁴ and therefore, UK's entry into the Common Market was of prime importance.

⁶³⁹ Summary notes May 3, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2. The immediate problems were the trilateral negotiations, the NPT, and the forthcoming Kennedy Round.

⁶⁴⁰ Department of State: Problems ahead in Europe, May, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2.

⁶⁴¹ Department of State: Problems ahead in Europe, May, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2.

⁶⁴² Summary notes May 3, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2.

⁶⁴³ Department of State: Problems ahead in Europe, May, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2.

⁶⁴⁴ Department of State: Problems ahead in Europe, May, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2.

The State Department continued this idealist approach to the transatlantic relation and argued that the US had to consult with the allies ‘fully and carefully’ in the dealings with the Soviet Union, because the European allies were ‘*sensitive to United States efforts to ease tensions with the Soviets – even though that is what they themselves are doing – simply because the two super powers, unlike themselves, are physically capable of jointly imposing solutions which they fear may not be in accord with West European interests.*’⁶⁴⁵ However, idealism had its limits. Although the department argued for ‘fully and carefully’ consultation with the allies on the American dealings with the Soviet Union, the Department of State implicitly suggested that any Western dealing with the Soviet Union had to be undertaken by the US and not Western European countries. In the paper under the heading of ‘East-West’ the Department specified that ‘East-West relations’ meant ‘*Eastern-Western Europe and US-Eastern Europe*’.⁶⁴⁶ Much as the deliberations of Owen, of the Policy Planning Council, had revealed, it was a central feature of US policy that Western Europe should be contained from having ‘out of framework’ dealings with the Soviet Union on the subject of a European settlement, as discussed in Chapter 6. Indeed American unilateralism in its dealings with the Soviet Union should be protected from interference from Western Europe. Rusk had, in fact, subscribed to the same concept, when he in 1964 strove to protect America’s relationship with and policies towards the Soviet Union from Germany.⁶⁴⁷

The Department of State’s paper was mostly an information memorandum announcing the department’s thoughts on and doings with the European allies up until May, 1967, to the rest of the administration represented at the NSC meeting. The paper explained that as the France-NATO crisis was over and the nuclear question along with the force level question was about to be resolved, the American emphasis should be placed on ‘*the political side of the alliance*’,⁶⁴⁸ to which end the Harmel study served.

According to the Department, the Harmel study was a result of a growing public feeling that there was a need to bring the alliance into ‘harmony’ with the times, and a Western European desire to counter de Gaulle’s attack by ‘*improving NATO as a forum for concerting policies*’.⁶⁴⁹ However, the department also recognized that ‘*under the surface [sic], there*

⁶⁴⁵ Department of State: Problems ahead in Europe, May, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2.

⁶⁴⁶ Department of State: Problems ahead in Europe, May, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2.

⁶⁴⁷ See chapters 6 for Owen’s deliberations, and Chapter 3 for Rusk’s.

⁶⁴⁸ Department of State: Problems ahead in Europe, May, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2.

⁶⁴⁹ Department of State: Problems ahead in Europe, May, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2.

*remains the feeling of many Europeans that they deserve a bigger voice and role in NATO. The ultimate answer to lack of balance in the Alliance can only come from the Europeans themselves – through their unification. ... equality is not something we can confer.*⁶⁵⁰

The US would, in other words, only accept equality in the Alliance on the basis of a united Europe within the alliance. The Department of State in effect artificially limited the ways and means for the European allies to gain equality within the alliance. The Grand Design remained the preferred scheme for managing and developing the alliance (towards equality), whereas some sort of multilateralism or Western European unification within the alliance separate from the Western European integration process, which de Gaulle had so effectively blocked, as a means to equality was completely shut out. The Belgian foreign minister Harmel had, in fact, proposed the latter. Equality was thus not something the Johnson administration was prepared to ‘confer’ to the European allies. This was essentially a convenient way to maintain some unilateralism, since a united Europe within the alliance had somewhat long prospects in the late 1960s.

The Department of State also brought forward that the US had one ‘point’ to get across to the allies during the Harmel studies, namely that in any European settlement there was a need for a United States involvement in all phases, mostly, according to the paper, for formal reasons such as the special responsibilities the US had towards Germany. However, the department added that *‘we and others will want to emphasize NATO’s role in concerting Western policies toward the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The French will object to this on principle. Several others will be reluctant lest it appear that NATO is confronting the East as a bloc’*.⁶⁵¹ Indeed, how the Alliance should approach the Eastern bloc was decisive for America’s unilateralist position in the Alliance.

Although the high-level staff the NSC meeting ended up discussing Western European selfishness, and Western Europe’s lack of financial contributions to the alliance, Bator had urged Johnson before the meeting to request a paper on *‘what kinds of things might be done to make good use of NATO’*.⁶⁵² Bator argued that the US should be well prepared for the conclusions that the Harmel report would end up with, and asked, rhetorically, in line with INR’s questioning of NATO’s instrumentality as a creator of détente, *‘What are the limitations on using a military alliance for other purposes? What kind of institutional changes might make sense?’*⁶⁵³ And lastly

⁶⁵⁰ Department of State: Problems ahead in Europe, May, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2.

⁶⁵¹ Department of State: Problems ahead in Europe, May, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2.

⁶⁵² Bator to Johnson, May 3, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2.

⁶⁵³ Bator to Johnson, May 3, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2.

Bator warned '*We need to avoid getting trapped into supporting proposals for new arrangements which lead nowhere. (We do not want another MLF history).*'⁶⁵⁴

Although the latter was crossed out, Bator's line of thinking revealed that at least Bator, the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, had severe reservations about the prospects of the Harmel study and the use of NATO for political purposes, such as orchestrating a détente but also that he was still somewhat unresolved on the purpose of NATO, despite the fact it had been discussed for some years at this point in time. There was, in other words, some discord among high level policy makers as to the extent the alliance could be moved into the political area as the opposite of the strictly military area.

Close Coordination and Atlantic Links

In a back-ground paper from the Policy Planning Council to the State Department's European desk on the future of Europe, Miriam Camps⁶⁵⁵ also discussed the relations between the US and Western Europe in light of this new mood in Western Europe. Camps argued that two developments had changed the character of the American relations with Western Europe. One was the diminishing threat from the Soviet Union towards Europe; another was the stability and prosperity in Western Europe, which demanded less American involvement than in the 1950s. Moreover, the European '*climate of opinion*'⁶⁵⁶ resented a continuation of American involvement anno 1950s.⁶⁵⁷ Camps characterized the relation of the 1950s as '*abnormal and markedly unequal*',⁶⁵⁸ and argued that the US should maintain the 'closeness' of the 1950s in the future because of Western Europe's growing strength and unity. Camps elaborated on the concept of a 'uniting Europe', which referred to the inclusion of the UK and other Western European countries into the EC, and argued, displaying a certain traditionalism, that the US continued to favor Western European unity both because '*it is good for the countries in Europe themselves*'⁶⁵⁹ but also because '*it is good for the United States to have in a uniting*

⁶⁵⁴ Bator to Johnson, May 3, 1967. LBJL, NSF, NSC Meetings File, box 2.

⁶⁵⁵ Miriam Camps is the author of the article on the Empty Chair crisis in EEC from 1967, in which Camps argues the crisis was a crisis of constitutionalism, i.e. about de Gaulle blocking the continued supra-nationalism. This view however, has only recently been rebuked by Ludlow. See Chapter 3.

⁶⁵⁶ Background paper, June 27, 1967, Owen to Leddy. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council, box 301.

⁶⁵⁷ Background paper, June 27, 1967, Owen to Leddy. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council, box 301.

⁶⁵⁸ Background paper, June 27, 1967, Owen to Leddy. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council, box 301.

⁶⁵⁹ Background paper, June 27, 1967, Owen to Leddy. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council, box 301.

Europe ... a partner who shares our basic conceptions about the nature of the world order we hope to see develop.⁶⁶⁰

NATO was according to Camps the ‘institutional link’ between the European and Atlantic camp, and the future task of NATO was the new role in easing tensions in the East-West relations. Although Camps displayed some skepticism towards the Eastern European attitudes, Camps believed this was a genuine and important task for NATO. However, while exploring the possibilities in Eastern Europe *‘it is important that the NATO nations keep each other informed; that we move in parallel rather than cross purposes. We are not suggesting that the Atlantic nations try to have a single collective approach to the East, but we do need to have a closely coordinated approach if the opportunities for improving the situation in Central Europe are to be fully and safely exploited’*.⁶⁶¹ The hitherto existing bilateralism, i.e., that Western European states uncoordinated with the rest of the allies including the US exchanged goods and culture with Eastern Europe, was considered somewhat ‘unsafe’ by Camps, completely in line with the State Department’s thinking since the first Bridge Building policy in 1964, with which, as discussed in Chapter 4, the administration aimed at controlling the European allies’ Eastern European outreach to protect the American position in the alliance and Europe at large. At the same time, Camps declared, the US did not want a single, collective approach as this would inhibit the American freedom of choice in foreign policy, this sort of approach would tamper with US unilateralism. Camps added to her analysis that the Policy Planning staff hoped that the Harmel study would come up with *‘some imaginative new ideas’* about how NATO could play a role in the search for a European settlement.

Camps did not see the Harmel study resulting in something that would inhibit the American unilateralism. Camps, in fact, envisioned that the ‘three main strands’ in America’s European policy, namely continued European integration, maintenance of the Atlantic ‘link’, and pursuance of better relations with Eastern Europe, would be mutually supporting and not cause friction if the US and *‘Western Europe see and understand the need for all three strands in similar terms’*,⁶⁶² i.e., there was no room for Gaullist thinking or any other diverging political thinking, which would break with the assumptions upon which these ultimately American strands was based. Camps’ report displayed a traditional approach to the transatlantic relations despite this new political mood in Western

⁶⁶⁰ Background paper, June 27, 1967, Owen to Leddy. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council, box 301.

⁶⁶¹ Background paper, June 26, 1967, Owen to Leddy June 27. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council, box 301.

⁶⁶² Background paper, June 26, 1967, Owen to Leddy June 27. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council, box 301.

Europe. The new mood only caused Camps to deliberate on, how a protective unilateralism was maintained in dealing with the Alliance's new task in Eastern Europe despite this new assertiveness in Western Europe (that was the very reason for this 'future' task). Indeed, Camps stressed more than once in the report, that there was a 'need' to get the European allies to see the strands in 'similar terms' as America.

Harmel - the Decisive Phase

The issue of how to maintain US unilateralism when the Alliance moved into the political field was a decisive issue for the American delegation at the Harmel study, which went into its formulating phase during the summer and fall of 1967.

Subgroup 3 on NATO's general defense policy and posture was headed by Foy Kohler reflecting the importance the Johnson administration attached to bringing home to the allies the absolute necessity of an adequate deterrence based on the integration principle, as discussed in Chapter 6, especially the State Department wanted to force the European allies to re-commit to the integration principle, and as the Department of State was in charge of the Harmel study, this was one objective. Another objective was to strike a balance between coordinating and controlling the European allies' policies without jeopardizing US unilateralism. Subgroup 1, which studied East-West relations, was one venue for the Department of State to find the right balance between American unilateralism and coordination of policies. Another object was to raise the matter of the European allies' behavior in out of treaty areas, which subgroup 4 was dedicated to.

Protective measures

Much in line with Camps' background paper on the future of Europe Kohler explained in the summer of 1967 to the British rapporteur Watson of Subgroup 1 that the continued blossoming of East-West contacts in Europe demanded that the allies were '*fully cognizant of the impact on the security and political cohesion of Western Europe, of the progressive effects of these contacts and thus, where possible we should coordinate our efforts.*'⁶⁶³ The administration clearly believed that the difficulty was how to maintain and protect the American freedom of action in foreign policy while at the same time achieve this coordination and control with the allies' foreign policies within the alliance. Kohler argued that although NATO was central for East-West relations there were '*limits on how far it*

⁶⁶³ Kohler to Watson, July 13, 1967. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 260.

*will be possible and desirable to coordinate East-West relations*⁶⁶⁴ in NATO, and suggested that there should be some ‘benchmarks’ indicating when coordination of policy was necessary. Accordingly Kohler urged Watson to consider *‘what action will be particularly important to coordinate, and what the feasible limits may be on consultation about East-West matters’*, and suggested that *‘at least we can expect NATO to serve as a clearing house, which will help to provide each member of the Alliance with an over-all view of the state of East-West relationships, and reduce the risks of the NATO governments working cross purposes with each other’*,⁶⁶⁵ in other words, that the benchmarks would ensure the Western European allies did not inhibit or work against Americas’ foreign policy ends. Arguably the benchmarks can be seen as a defensive measure to protect US interests and policies from direct or indirect Western European interference.

Watson’s Subgroup 1 submitted paragraphs stating a sort of controlled bilateralism, thus *‘bilateral discussions between Eastern and Western states are indispensable means for improving relations between East and West in a period of relaxation of tension. They can be of great value if proceeded within the framework of agreed objectives, and if the governments concerned continue to observe their responsibilities to each other as members of the alliance.’*⁶⁶⁶ However, Subgroup 1’s final report also stated that there were limits to this controlled bilateralism’s possibilities for great achievements. The report stated that as the relations between East and West would develop due to the bilateral contacts, it was likely that the exchanges would deal increasingly with matters that concerned the entire alliance, therefore *‘in order to shape a stable larger European structure, involving both the United States and the Soviet Union, it will be desirable increasingly to work towards multilateral exchanges with Eastern governments in addition to bilateral ones.’*⁶⁶⁷

Thus, the benchmarks for when multilateralism was necessary, that Kohler had proposed to the British rapporteur, were limited to the matter of a European settlement. The benchmarks therefore on one hand left America’s relationship with the Soviet Union untouched and out of reach by the European allies. Thus, America’s freedom of action in its dealings with the Soviet Union was preserved and protected from European entanglement and interference. On the other hand, multilateralism on a European settlement codified American presence in Europe – thus hindered the exclusion of the US from any European

⁶⁶⁴ Kohler to Watson, July 13, 1967. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 260.

⁶⁶⁵ Kohler to Watson, July 13, 1967. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 260.

⁶⁶⁶ Paper issued as part of AC/261-N (rev) (i.e. up-to-date version of Sub-group 1 Final report, Nov. 1967. <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/80986.htm>.

⁶⁶⁷ Paper issued as part of AC/261-N (rev) (i.e. up-to-date version of Sub-group 1 Final report, Nov. 1967. <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/80986.htm>.

settlement as had been discussed in the administration earlier.⁶⁶⁸ This benchmarking exercise also reflected the Johnson administration's ultimate rejection of the Gaullist approach to the European settlement. The entire Harmel exercise can, as Bozo argues, be seen as the final showdown with French president de Gaulle and the Gaullist schemes for Europe.⁶⁶⁹ Subgroup 1's final report ended the part on multilateralism versus bilateralism with stressing that the alliance was '*an excellent forum for establishing ... and for maintaining the necessary degree of co-ordination both in our bilateral and multilateral dealings with the East*',⁶⁷⁰ just as Camps and the rest of the Department of State had argued throughout 1966.

However, as this may seem right up America's alley, the European allies were, in fact, also keen on maintaining their freedom of action in East-West matters. The Gaullist claim that there was a preponderance of American power in Western Europe was widely accepted.

Kohler also pushed the principle of integration to the British rapporteur, and argued that the Soviet Union despite the relaxation of tensions continued to be a major military threat towards Western Europe and the US, and therefore demanded an 'adequate deterrence' which was fundamental for the future relations between East and West.⁶⁷¹ Needless to say any adequate deterrence was based upon the principle of integration. Behind this insistence on the deterrence was the widely held assumption in the Johnson administration that Western Europeans were inclined to interpret the Soviet Union's relative peaceful approach to them as a genuine expression of peaceful intentions, contrary to the administration, which continued subscribing to old perceptions, and argued that the Soviet outlook had not changed nor was about to, in fact, détente was still a crafty tactic to break up the Western alliance according to the Johnson administration.⁶⁷² Kohler's insistence on the adequate deterrence was also an expression of how the staff of the Department of State had their hearts set on obtaining a renewed, formal adherence to the integration principle from the European allies.

Reviving the Grand Design

In August, 1967, Rostow, Johnson's NSA, estimated that France would withdraw completely from the alliance in 1968, and in the same month

⁶⁶⁸ See Chapter 6.

⁶⁶⁹ Bozo (1998).

⁶⁷⁰ Paper issued as part of AC/261-N (rev) (i.e. up-to-date version of Sub-group 1 Final report, Nov. 1967. <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/80986.htm>.

⁶⁷¹ Kohler to Watson, July 13, 1967. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 260.

⁶⁷² Kohler to Watson, July 13, 1967. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 260.

the CIA estimated that de Gaulle was prepared to side with the USSR on all matters that would not risk the American nuclear umbrella.⁶⁷³ However, the administration did not begin to talk about ‘a second French crisis’ until September, 1967, when the Harmel study went into its final and decisive phase. The administration realized that although the French obstructionism was somewhat presupposed, it also posed serious problems. The Department of State argued that if France used the Harmel exercise as a pretext for withdrawing completely from the alliance, it could have serious impact on the alliance and alliance cohesion.⁶⁷⁴ However, as before, the coupling of Gaullism and German politics was something the Johnson administration dreaded, and Cleveland, the administration’s Permanent Representative to NATO, warned that the Germans probably found it more desirable to demonstrate the existence of ‘a Franco-German rapprochement’ than a ‘forthright result’ from the Harmel exercise.⁶⁷⁵ Germany was not alone in worrying about the relationship with France, that subsequently restrained them during the Harmel study, indeed, both Canada and Denmark had these considerations and, according to the Department of State, *‘this reinforces their own reluctance to take on additional political commitments via the alliance’*.⁶⁷⁶ The lack of the German backing would puncture any study on the future of the alliance.

The French especially found it difficult to deal with Subgroup 2’s report. Subgroup 2 was led by the former Belgian foreign minister and NATO Secretary General Paul Henri Spaak, who had written a report on inter-allied relations that *‘was a cry from the heart’*.⁶⁷⁷ Spaak’s report was strongly anti-Gaullist and stressed the need for Western European unity and Atlantic partnership. Although Rusk characterized the report with forbearance, Rusk was in complete agreement with Spaak’s deliberations, which were essentially a recast of the Grand Design. Indeed, Rusk’s instructions to the relevant posts were an instrument to revive the Grand Design: *‘while US would not want to take the initiative in pushing the idea in formal meetings, US participants should endeavor to stimulate Belgium or some other country to put in appropriate proposal for increased European cohesion in the Alliance framework (i.e., a development of the Belgian idea for a ‘European caucus’). Such a proposal could relate to the principle of advance discussions among all or some European members of the Alliance on subjects for political consultation in NAC. ...*

⁶⁷³ Rostow to Johnson, Aug. 9, 1967. LBJL, NSF, France, box 173; CIA, Aug. 5, 1967, *ibid*.

⁶⁷⁴ State to NATO capitals, Oct. 4, 1967. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 268.

⁶⁷⁵ Memo to Rostow, Oct. 2, 1967. LBJL, Papers of Walt Rostow, box 16.

⁶⁷⁶ Department of State, Senior Interdepartmental Group, Oct. 16, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Agency file, box 60.

⁶⁷⁷ Memo to Rostow, Oct. 2, 1967. LBJL, Papers of Walt Rostow, box 16.

it would ... be very useful for the idea to be advanced as clearly as possible with appropriate language to make clear that objective is to improve Western European cohesion and cooperation on broad framework of Atlantic cooperation'.⁶⁷⁸ Implicit in Rusk's instruction and the Grand Design was the idea that European skirmishes should be solved without American political entanglement, although also without the Europeans escalating the matter beyond American control via the NATO framework. Rusk in other words, was as traditional in his thinking as he possibly could be.

In the end, France did not withdraw from NATO or the Harmel exercise. The French feared that they would be isolated in Europe and break the bond with Germany if they refused to adopt the report's conclusions.⁶⁷⁹ Thus, the administration's fears proved quite unfounded.

America's Major Interests

Although the French were '*a major tactical and diplomatic problem*'⁶⁸⁰ the State Department argued by the fall of 1967, that there remained three 'important substantive issues' to be sorted out at the Harmel exercise. The first was the East-West relations in a European context, in particular '*the general balance to be struck between the continuing need for Western strength and efforts to improve relations with the Soviet Union and the nations of Eastern Europe*'⁶⁸¹ and in connection with this balance the '*best arrangements for concerting Western policies and positions*'.⁶⁸² The second was the inter-allied relations, and the third was '*the extent to which and the means by which the Alliance members should harmonize their policies regarding developments beyond the North Atlantic Treaty area*'.⁶⁸³

The Department of State reiterated that the US had been in basic agreement with the Belgian government's rationale for undertaking the study, in fact, the US agreed that there was a need to respond to the 'atmosphere of détente', 'reexamine the Alliance's task in light of Western Europe's recovery and increased strength', and 're-cement' the alliance in the wake of de Gaulle's withdrawal.⁶⁸⁴ However, the department revealed that the US had 'two points of major interest' in the

⁶⁷⁸ Rusk to Embassy France, Sep. 6, 1967. FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, Western Europe Region, doc. 264.

⁶⁷⁹ Bozo (1998), p. 355.

⁶⁸⁰ Department of State, Senior Interdepartmental Group, Oct. 16, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Agency file, box 60.

⁶⁸¹ Department of State, Senior Interdepartmental Group, Oct. 16, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Agency file, box 60.

⁶⁸² Department of State, Senior Interdepartmental Group, Oct. 16, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Agency file, box 60.

⁶⁸³ Department of State, Senior Interdepartmental Group, Oct. 16, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Agency file, box 60.

⁶⁸⁴ Department of State, Senior Interdepartmental Group, Oct. 16, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Agency file, box 60.

alliance study, namely 'elicit ... a greater Allied role and sense of collective responsibility on a global basis as well as in the strictly NATO and European context', and 'to establish the need for maintenance of Western deterrent strength and political cohesion; i.e. to strike a careful balance between deterrence and détente' [underlining in original]⁶⁸⁵

In other words, the Acheson committee's formula was official strategy, and the focus on out of treaty area was completely in line with INR's argumentation during 1965 and 1966.⁶⁸⁶ The Acheson Committee's formula was, as argued in Chapter 6, a means to contain and control the allies' Eastern policies and maintain alliance cohesion, which ultimately was a protection of US foreign policy interests, indeed a policy of detachment.

However, the most 'difficult' area in the entire study was, according to the State Department, *'the question of harmonizing Alliance policies beyond the North Atlantic Treaty area.'*⁶⁸⁷ Although the department did not believe it wise to *'try an engage others directly on Vietnam or Cuba via NATO'*⁶⁸⁸ it was nevertheless necessary *'to build the greatest possible common understanding and support for our objectives'*⁶⁸⁹ [underlining in the original]. However, the European allies were, according to the Department, extremely wary of American pressure, even though some of them would be willing to 'harmonize' policies. Therefore, according to the Department of State, the Harmel exercise was a first step in a *'continuing process of re-engaging Western Europe's interest and sense of responsibility on a world-wide basis'*⁶⁹⁰ [underlining in original].

The Harmel report's recommendations were formally adopted at the NATO ministerial meeting in December, 1967. In the final report, the allies adhered to the principle of integration, the necessity of deterrence, a coordinated détente, and maintained that the Alliance was the primary vehicle for a European settlement. Indeed the allies largely adhered to the formula of the Acheson Committee that was later refined by the Department of State. Accordingly the allies stated that *'Its [NATO] first function is to maintain adequate military strength and political solidarity to deter aggression and other forms of pressure.'* And that *'military security and a policy of détente are not contradictory but complementary. Collective defence is a stabilizing factor in world politics. It is the necessary condition for effective policies directed*

⁶⁸⁵ Department of State, Senior Interdepartmental Group, Oct. 16, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Agency file, box 60.

⁶⁸⁶ See Chapter 7.

⁶⁸⁷ Department of State, Senior Interdepartmental Group, Oct. 16, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Agency file, box 60.

⁶⁸⁸ Department of State, Senior Interdepartmental Group, Oct. 16, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Agency file, box 60.

⁶⁸⁹ Department of State, Senior Interdepartmental Group, Oct. 16, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Agency file, box 60.

⁶⁹⁰ Department of State, Senior Interdepartmental Group, Oct. 16, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Agency file, box 60.

towards a greater relaxation of tensions. The way to peace and stability in Europe rests in particular on the use of the Alliance constructively in the interest of détente. The participation of the USSR and the USA will be necessary to achieve a settlement of the political problems in Europe'.⁶⁹¹ On the matter of benchmarks, that is, the means for the Department of State to maintain a certain unilateralism, the allies declared that: *'As sovereign states the Allies are not obliged to subordinate their policies to collective decision. The Alliance affords an effective forum and clearing house for the exchange of information and views; thus, each of the Allies can decide its policy in the light of close knowledge of the problems and objectives of the others. To this end the practice of frank and timely consultations needs to be deepened and improved. ... bearing in mind that the pursuit of détente must not be allowed to split the Alliance. The chances of success will clearly be greatest if the Allies remain on parallel courses*'.⁶⁹²

Indeed, US Western European policy aims on the reconstitution of the Alliance, which had been developed since at least de Gaulle's withdrawal from NATO's integrated command in March, 1966, was achieved with the Harmel report's recommendations.. These policy aims reflected, besides security needs, a certain purpose of the Alliance based on a certain perception of the European allies, namely a rejection of the European reason of state. As such, the Harmel report's recommendations and reasoning were an expression of an American policy of detachment towards the Alliance as it had moved into the political area.

Only the question on Allied behavior in the out of treaty areas, did the Department of State's aims suffer a setback. The final report stated that although the rest of the world was of great importance, the UN was the first and foremost venue for allied contributions to solving problems in these areas. This apparent Western European reluctance to commit globally via the alliance reflected the level of divergence on global policies between the US and the European allies.

The Department of State to a large extend succeeded with re-cementing the alliance, and induce the allies to re-adhere to the fundamental principle of deterrence based on integration. Moreover, the department also succeeded with securing and protecting America's foreign policies from European interference while at the same time NATO was reinforced as an instrument for coordinating policies, and therefore an instrument for the US to control the allies' policies. The Harmel report's recommendations in effect established conditions for a policy of detachment. Did this mean that the European allies did not

⁶⁹¹ The Future Tasks of the Alliance, Dec. 13, 1967.

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_26700.htm

⁶⁹² The Future Tasks of the Alliance, Dec. 13, 1967.

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_26700.htm

object to a certain level of US unilateralism? Or the other way round, the European allies wanted to retain some unilateralism as well.

A New German Assertiveness

Immediately after the Grand Coalition came to power and Kurt Georg Kiesinger entered the Chancellery in December, 1966, the Policy Planning Council of the State Department moved quickly to assess *'the implications of a more independent German foreign policy'*.⁶⁹³ The Council asserted that the current trend towards a more independent or nationalist German foreign policy stemmed from a correlation of circumstances among which an *'increasing German frustration over the fact that the policies of Western strength and unity'*⁶⁹⁴ had produced no progress towards unification, which appeared *'more distant than ever'*.⁶⁹⁵ The Germans were also, according to the Council, disillusioned if there would ever be a place for Germany as something more than a client state in a Western European community or a united Atlantic community. Moreover, the American détente policies were largely read in Germany as a something that would underwrite the German division rather than promote a solution or even prepare a path for unification. In addition, the German leaders *'generally'* felt that the US had ignored or even tried to override *'essential FRG interests on important issues in the context of intra-Atlantic relations'*.⁶⁹⁶ The Council also argued that de Gaulle also had an impact in Germany. On one hand by example; de Gaulle had exploited the East-West détente, which reinforced the *'strong inclination to develop relations with Eastern Europe, especially East Germany, without regard to ideological restraints'*.⁶⁹⁷ The German *'nationalists'*, in fact, entertained the idea that German unification was reachable with the Soviet Union on the basis of neutralization. On the other hand, Gaullism's claims about US domination were also *'attractive'* to some German leaders. Although the Council argued that German leaders still maintained the support for NATO and Western European unity, the sense of a new direction in German foreign policy was overriding, and by January, 1967, there was no clear course or consensus in the Johnson administration on what this new independent policy would entail.

The Council suggested two solutions to this new German trend. One of them was to *'turn the FRG trend toward greater independence so that it might generate increasing maturity, consistent with the maintenance of US-FRG confidence*

⁶⁹³ S/P, Jan. 30, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Staff, box 301.

⁶⁹⁴ S/P, Jan. 30, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Staff, box 301.

⁶⁹⁵ S/P, Jan. 30, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Staff, box 301.

⁶⁹⁶ S/P, Jan. 30, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Staff, box 301.

⁶⁹⁷ S/P, Jan. 30, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Staff, box 301.

and of political cohesion among the key members of the Atlantic Alliance'.⁶⁹⁸ The 'essential' US interest in this scheme was that Western Germany found a 'politically satisfying role in an increasingly cohesive Western community',⁶⁹⁹ which made a 'turning' of the German trend possible, however only if there were a Western community in which Germany could find a political appropriate place. The problem was, according to the council, that Western cohesion and Western frameworks, both the Atlantic alliance and Western European integration, were somewhat fragile and therefore not able to absorb an assertive Germany, and the odds were considerable for an acceleration of the German trend. The question was, therefore, how the US could bring about a sufficient framework to turn the Germans into?

In a straight forward fashion, the Council argued that *'there is little, if any, prospect of significant progress in the near future toward Atlantic unity. This judgment should require no elaboration, for the US itself is not ready for any serious limitations on its sovereignty, even if the Europeans were now interested in accepting some subordination of their sovereignties in an Atlantic framework'*.⁷⁰⁰ In other words, the US was not on the verge to move beyond the existing level of political organization of the Atlantic framework and the Council's insistence on unilateralism prevented the creation of a sufficient framework to contain the 'new' assertive Germany. Thus, the American unilateralism was, in fact, not only under pressure from Gaullist *claims* about an American hegemony in Western Europe but was also now caught up with by the *actual* political and economic development in Germany. The Council even added that although it was important to make efforts to improve the political consultation in NATO, consultation did not *'by its very nature'*⁷⁰¹ lend itself to any progress on Atlantic unity. Thus, the US should merely concentrate on keeping the existing institutions 'alive'.

The prospects for establishing a Western European framework to turn Germany into was equally scarce. Although a British entry into the EEC, which the Wilson government planned to apply for, was probably going to be vetoed by de Gaulle, and even in the event of British entry, there was no guarantee for a significant political role for Germany in Western Europe, according to the Council's thinking.

The Western European integration scheme also posed a separate problem for the US. De Gaulle's key objection to British entry was still the special relationship in the nuclear field, and the Wilson government was aware of this and had already shown signs to use the British nuclear technology as some sort of bargaining chip with the French. The US had

⁶⁹⁸ S/P, Jan. 30, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Staff, box 301, p. 31.

⁶⁹⁹ S/P, Jan. 30, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Staff, box 301, p. 32

⁷⁰⁰ S/P, Jan. 30, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Staff, box 301, p. 32

⁷⁰¹ S/P, Jan. 30, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Staff, box 301, p. 32.

refused and continued to refuse letting the French in on American nuclear technology via the British, however the British might, according to the Council, proceed anyway, which obviously was against the policy of disarming the European allies. One option for the US to hinder this exchange was the nonproliferation scheme. The NPT could, in fact, be turned into the very political framework, which FRG could be tied or 'turned' into, where the Germans would enjoy a politically appropriate and equal role among the other Western European great powers.⁷⁰²

The NPT framework was the Council's primary proposal to 'turn' the new German trend. However, in the event it was rejected the Council suggested an approach that would maintain or even expand the German confidence in the German-American relationship. This however, might at times mean, according to the Council, that the US had to support German initiatives and policies which were in conflict with US interests and policies.⁷⁰³ Obviously this solution was second to creating a 'new' Atlantic framework such as the NPT, since it would potentially compromise American interests and unilateralism in US dealings with the Soviet Union, as discussed in the previous Chapters. The protection of America's policy towards the Soviet Union from Germany had, in fact, already been an issue in 1964, when the Erhard administration presented their Peace Plan, as discussed in Chapter 5.

Tying Germany in the NPT

The European clause

The question of German adherence to the NPT had been going back and forth between Washington and Bonn since the fall of 1966 before the Policy Planning Council detected the new assertiveness and proposed to 'turn' the new German trend into a nonproliferation scheme, and before the Johnson administration believed there was a shift in the Soviet position on the possibility to conclude a nonproliferation treaty in October, 1966. The Erhard administration had made it clear that they demanded that a nonproliferation treaty would not prohibit a future European nuclear force under European command.⁷⁰⁴ Contrary to this the British was against the European option, indeed *'Her Majesty's Government have always considered that a non-proliferation treaty should exclude the possibility of nuclear dissemination to associations of states, whatever their membership and whether or not an existing nuclear power should cease to have control of nuclear*

⁷⁰² S/P, Jan. 30, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Staff, box 301, p. 37.

⁷⁰³ S/P, Jan. 30, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Staff, box 301, p. 37.

⁷⁰⁴ Lilienfeld to Johnson, Feb. 25, 1966. FRUS, 1964-1968 Vol. XI, Arms Control and Disarmament, doc. 120.

weapons'.⁷⁰⁵ The Johnson administration thus faced a delicate question in Western Europe.

The question of a European nuclear force in connection with the administration's plans for a nonproliferation treaty had been on the agenda in both the White House and the Department of State since the MLF was finally sunk in December, 1964. NSAM 322 of December 17, 1964, stated very clearly that the administration was against a European clause, and even reluctant to revise such a provision if Europe turned federated. This was, as argued in Chapter 5, a policy of detachment in the nuclear field. In the fall of 1966, the administration had decided to resume the negotiations with the Soviet Union for a nonproliferation treaty in Geneva. The Soviets appeared to have shifted position on the matter of détente, in December, 1966, Kosygin, the Soviet ambassador to Washington, publicly announced that the US and the USSR had a 'community of interests'.⁷⁰⁶

In August, 1966, Walt Rostow, who had become LBJ's National Security Advisor on the condition that he would have close cooperation with the Department of State,⁷⁰⁷ tabled his thoughts on the nonproliferation treaty and the central issues, which it raised including the issue of a Western European right to fire nuclear weapons. According to Rostow, the 'real issue' with a nonproliferation treaty was whether, if an agreement between the US and the Soviet Union was reached, the US would be forced to 'freeze' the nuclear organization of the West '*ruling out either an Atlantic collective nuclear system or a European system*',⁷⁰⁸ and not, as was often assumed, primarily German '*access to nuclear weapons or German influence over nuclear decisions*'.⁷⁰⁹ Rostow argued, that FRG in fact was, in a limited sense, a nuclear power because of the two-key bilateral arrangement Germany had with the US. The limitation of American freedom of action that a 'freeze' of the nuclear organization in both Europe and South East Asia would, in Rostow's argument, force the US to maintain the two-key bilateral system. Although this had one great advantage namely '*the requirement of a U.S. positive decision to fire is ambiguous*',⁷¹⁰ the disadvantages far overshadowed this. Rostow claimed that if the US accepted this limitation Europe would see it as a step against European integration. Furthermore, and more importantly, it was possible that Western Europe would settle with a European nuclear system with an independent European right to fire, which the Germans had argued for, a system which would force the US to pull back from

⁷⁰⁵ Aide-Memoire to the Department of State, Jun. 1, 1966. FRUS, 1964-1968 Vol. XI, Arms Control and Disarmament, doc. 132.

⁷⁰⁶ Dumbrell (2004), p. 43.

⁷⁰⁷ Rostow to Johnson, Sep. 5, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30.

⁷⁰⁸ Rostow to Johnson, Aug. 12, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30.

⁷⁰⁹ Rostow to Johnson, Aug. 12, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30.

⁷¹⁰ Rostow to Johnson, Aug. 12, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30.

Western Europe. Indeed, *'as soon as a united Europe claimed a right to fire independent of the U.S. we would pull back. We cannot let SAC [Strategic Air Command] be triggered without our assent; and our intimate, integrated NATO arrangement involve us so deeply that a European firing would involve us.'*⁷¹¹ As discussed in Chapter 5 in connection with the MLF, an independent European finger on the nuclear trigger would drag the US into a principally exclusive European war, however, according to Rostow the US would retreat from Europe in that situation.

However, Rostow argued that 'thoughtful' Europeans would *'accept both the advantages of our involvement and a continued US veto.'*⁷¹² Limiting the US from creating an Atlantic nuclear force with a continued American veto also inhibited the Johnson administration's policy, adopted with NSAM 345 Nuclear Planning, which formalized that the US should work towards hindering further establishments of national nuclear deterrents in Europe, and get the UK and France to abolish their national nuclear deterrents.⁷¹³ Rostow further argued that without the possibility of creating a NATO nuclear system Germany, Italy and others would 'go national' because of the pressures from the *Force de Frappe* and the British deterrent.⁷¹⁴ In other words, the US would be unable to control their European allies in the nuclear field unless, according to Rostow, an option for creating a Atlantic framework was maintained in a future nonproliferation treaty

The only problem, however, was Western Europe's insistence on the 'European clause'. Birrenbach, one of CDU's Atlanticists and one of *'U.S. best friends on the European continent'*,⁷¹⁵ let the administration know that he could not accept *'a total elimination of the European option'*,⁷¹⁶ which furthermore was the *'almost ambiguous opinion of the CDU'*,⁷¹⁷ including the Gaullists, who claimed that an independent European nuclear force was the only way to go to for Western Europe. The German insistence on the European option was, according to Rostow, a symbolic and political issue, which made it more powerful than had it been military or technical.⁷¹⁸

McNamara agreed with Rostow that *'the heart of the matter'* was that as long as the US was committed via NATO to Western Europe, the US *'cannot, should not, will not give up our veto over firing nuclear weapons in that theater'*.⁷¹⁹ However, the issues of a Western European insistence on an

⁷¹¹ Rostow to Johnson, Aug. 12, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷¹² Rostow to Johnson, Aug. 12, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷¹³ See Chapter 7.

⁷¹⁴ Rostow to Johnson, Aug. 12, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷¹⁵ Rostow to Johnson, Aug. 12, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷¹⁶ McGhee Extract of telegram July 20, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷¹⁷ McGhee Extract of telegram July 20, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷¹⁸ Rostow to Johnson, Aug. 12, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷¹⁹ Rostow to Johnson, Sep. 2, 1966. LBJL NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

independent European right to fire from an integrated European nuclear force and the American insistence on a nuclear veto the nonproliferation treaty constituted a problem between the US and the allies, indeed the American veto would lose its significance and instrumentality to control a nuclear war.⁷²⁰ Although this had been, at least, a theoretical problem for a long time, the prospects of an advance towards an agreement with the Soviet Union made the matter of the European clause somewhat urgent.

The nonproliferation treaty and the European clause, to put it in other words, clashed with America's post-war position as a European power and American unilateralism in nuclear affairs. The insistence on a European clause was also an expression of the level of Western European realignment. Rostow argued that the issue of a European clause and the American veto never arose with the MLF scheme because the '*retention of out veto was universally accepted*'.⁷²¹ However, since 1964 when the MLF was finally abandoned, Western Europe led by the Germans had by the fall of 1966, come to question this nuclear unilateralism as the German insistence on the European clause expressed.

However, it was not unfounded that the Western Europeans believed the US would accept a European clause as Rostow explained Johnson. There had been several statements from the administration, statements which implied that '*if the Europeans fully united we would not rule out the possibility of their having an independent right to fire nuclear weapons from a presumably integrated European nuclear force*'.⁷²² However, Rostow acknowledged that behind these statements there was no de facto American backing to a European nuclear force. The US had merely implied their backing to encourage Western European integration, and had been confident that 'if and when' Europe would be fully integrated Western Europe would on one hand '*in fact, not ask for the surrender of the U.S. veto, because they would lose more in the dilution of the U.S. commitment ... than they would gain by this act of "independence"*',⁷²³ and on the other hand if Western Europe would reach the stage of 'true' integration there would be an equivalent to the American President with whom it would be possible to work out a '*rational arrangement ... consistent with the requirements of the alliance*'.⁷²⁴

Despite the Germans and other allies apparently believed it was within reach to have a European clause, Rostow was optimistic that the European allies could be made to accept the proposition that in was in Western Europe's interest that the European clause was given up and the

⁷²⁰ Rostow to Johnson, Sep. 2, 1966. LBJL NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷²¹ Rostow to Johnson, Sep. 2, 1966. LBJL NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷²² Rostow to Johnson, Sep. 2, 1966. LBJL NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷²³ Rostow to Johnson, Sep. 2, 1966. LBJL NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷²⁴ Rostow to Johnson, Sep. 2, 1966. LBJL NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

American veto thus maintained. Rostow believed that what Western Europe really was ‘*groping for – although they are not very clear about it [sic] – is not an independent right to fire, but an insurance policy against the possibility that at some future time some American administration might pick up its nuclear weapons and troops and go home*’.⁷²⁵ Therefore, the British and the French nuclear deterrent and a future common European nuclear force was an insurance against Europe being left ‘*naked of nuclear capacity*’ in the future.⁷²⁶ Although the Gaullists, either French or German would, in fact, argue for an European finger on the nuclear trigger in reality, the fear of being nuclearly abandoned by the US was real for some allies, such as Denmark.⁷²⁷

Thus, according to Rostow, as long the US remained a ‘fully committed ally’ Western Europe could be made to see that ‘*it is ridiculous for them to think of firing their nuclear weapons without ours; and that the threat to use a small nuclear force in Europe to engage us in a nuclear war to which we were not committed could only lead to the U.S. pulling back and dissociating itself from European defense. No American President is going to place in the hands of the Europeans – or anyone else – the right to determine when we are engaged in a nuclear war*’ [underlining in original].⁷²⁸ This line of thinking was the ultimate rejection of the European reason of state, and the ultimate outcome of the policy of detachment in the nuclear field. The whole idea of keeping untangled in European wars had been the guiding line since the late 1700s, and Rostow’s notion that the US would isolate itself from a war the US was not committed to, reflected the proposition that wars in Europe, which the US was not committed to, in fact, was a result of the faulty European reason of state.

Although Rostow still doubted in September, 1966, that the Soviet Union was truly interested in nonproliferation; rather the Kremlin was interested in breaking up the Western alliance, he argued that nonproliferation essentially was in both the American, Soviet, and Western European interest that a nonproliferation treaty would not be limited, and thereby rule out a collective Atlantic nuclear force in the future. A treaty without this limitation would meet Soviet interests in tying Germany down (guaranteed by America’s veto) and meet Western Europe’s interest in not being abandoned by the US by way of maintaining the American veto.⁷²⁹ Rostow proposed that this new proposition was suggested to the Soviet Union at ENDC in Geneva. In October, 1966, Rostow’s skepticism towards Soviet intentions was confounded as Johnson met with Soviet foreign minister Gromyko, and

⁷²⁵ Rostow to Johnson, Sep. 2, 1966. LBJL NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷²⁶ Rostow to Johnson, Sep. 2, 1966. LBJL NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷²⁷ Leddy to Rusk, Feb. 4, 1966. LBJL NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 31.

⁷²⁸ Rostow to Johnson, Sep. 2, 1966. LBJL NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷²⁹ Rostow to Johnson, Aug. 12, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

at the meeting the possibility of a summit on nuclear proliferation was launched.⁷³⁰

Only Owen of the State Department's Policy Planning Council did not see a problem with an independent European nuclear force, in fact, a collective European force would (in a distant) future absorb both the French and British nuclear deterrents. Moreover, Owen did not see a problem with ruling out the possibility for the US to create an Atlantic nuclear arrangement without a certain level of European integration.

Owen argued that the nonproliferation treaty with a specific duration should consist of two protocols one pertaining to the two superpowers, in which they pledged not to surrender control over nuclear weapons to any country or group of countries, and another protocol for the European allies stating that they would not join or create a collective nuclear force except when '*European integration reaches the point at which European countries decide to substitute a collective defense for present national nuclear forces*'.⁷³¹ Owen's rationale for this 'successor state principle' was that on one hand it would prohibit the superpowers from giving up their respective vetoes, and on the other hand it would prohibit a collective force from being created except when European integration had moved substantially further. Owen claimed this was a substantial change in the current US position at Geneva since it prohibited the superpowers from giving up their vetoes, and prohibited the formation of collective forces unless the European integration criteria was met. Owen was probably quite in line with the original thinking, namely that a fully integrated Western Europe would not consider it an interest to actually have an independent nuclear force, however, Owen also claimed that this reflected 'reality' and revealed himself as quite a theologian. Owen argued that '*it seems unlikely, given developments in this field [collective nuclear force] since December 1964, that any collective force will be formed, except as a result of progress toward European integration*'.⁷³² Thus, by maintaining a certain level of European integration as a precondition for the formation of a collective nuclear force, Owen essentially re-launched another theological MLF scheme to further Western European integration. Moreover, Owen also revealed that the administration would not create a collective nuclear force without a proper level of European integration.

Owen also argued that the administration should consult with the Germans, since, according to Owen at least, the German public opinion was preoccupied with 'equality' and Wehner, one of the 'Big three in the SPD' had stated that '*unconditional support of the SPD for every treaty called a non-proliferation was out of the question*', and although the SPD supported a

⁷³⁰ Dumbrell (2004), p. 46p.

⁷³¹ Owen to Rostow, Sep. 27, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30

⁷³² Owen to Rostow, Sep. 27, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30.

treaty ‘if it can be determined that such a treaty is not meant simply as instrument of discrimination against the Federal Republic’.⁷³³ The question of whether or not there would be a European option was apparently a benchmark for discrimination of the Federal Republic in the German government across the SPD and CDU.

Owen’s proposal for a successor state principle did not become the formal position of the US at first. Rather Rostow’s concept, and with him McNamara and Rusk set out to maintain the American veto and not leaving room for a European clause.⁷³⁴

Apart from the US administration’s opposition to a European clause the Soviet Union also had grave reservations about such a construct. Kosygin and Gromyko were ardently against an article that did not explicitly bar the transfer of weapons and control of weapons from a nuclear state to a group of states, which they argued merited to arm Germany with nuclear weapons via NATO or via the creation of an independent European force with either the British or French weapons. Although the Johnson administration did see eye to eye with the Kremlin on this issue, the administration faced a major challenge with accommodating the Germans. Indeed the Kiesinger administration picked up where the Erhard administration had left, and declared in January, 1967, as the negotiations with the Soviet Union was well under way, that they in principle were in favor of the ‘NPT’ enterprise⁷³⁵ however, Kiesinger’s primary ‘preoccupation’ was ‘*keeping open the option for a European nuclear force*’,⁷³⁶ which would, according to Kiesinger, have come out of a further European integration.⁷³⁷ This position was reinforced again in May, as the administration’s best friend Birrenbach once again raised the issue of a European clause.⁷³⁸

The solution to the administration’s difficulty was an interpretation of the treaty’s article 2 based on the combination of the principle of ‘*what is not prohibited by the treaty is permitted*’⁷³⁹ and a watered down concept of a European independent force, namely Owen’s successor state principle. The treaty ‘*would not bar succession by a new federated European state to the nuclear status of one of its former components*’.⁷⁴⁰ This concept also had the advantage of British support; the British had, in fact, delivered a note to Kosygin stating exactly this interpretation.⁷⁴¹

⁷³³ Owen to Rostow, Sep. 27, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30.

⁷³⁴ See for instance Rusk to Gromyko, Nov. 21, 1966. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Bator, box. 30; Memcon UK-US, Oct. 14, 1966. Ibid.

⁷³⁵ McGhee to Rusk, Jan. 17, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 30.

⁷³⁶ McGhee to Rusk, Jan. 17, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 30.

⁷³⁷ McGhee to Rusk, Jan. 17, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 30.

⁷³⁸ Keeney to Rostow, May 9, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 31.

⁷³⁹ Keeney to Rostow, Feb. 27, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 31.

⁷⁴⁰ Fisher to Rusk, Feb. 25, 1967. FRUS, 1964-1968 Vol. XI, Arms Control and Disarmament, doc. 183.

⁷⁴¹ Keeney to Rostow, Feb. 27, 1967. LBJL, NSF, Papers of Francis Bator, box 31.

The interpretation also served as something that made the NPT a framework, which German assertiveness could be turned into as suggested by the Policy Planning Council.⁷⁴² The Council estimated that the successor state principle might well make the German's accede to the NPT, and thereby would the NPT be the very framework, which the assertive Germany was turned into.

The administration had, in fact, floated the successor state principle to the German Foreign Minister Brandt in February, 1967, who stated that *'he and the Chancellor had agreed they could live with the American interpretation [of the NPT's article 2]. Not all of his colleagues, however, were in agreement'*,⁷⁴³ and Brandt went on to warn against discrimination of Germany in terms of the peaceful use of nuclear technology and safeguards.

Although the administration realized that the Soviet Union would not state that they had agreed to such a successor state concept, the administration believed it was possible to achieve *'Soviet silence, or non-contradiction, when our allies and later the United States, state that the treaty would not bar succession by a new federated state to the nuclear status of one of its former components'*.⁷⁴⁴ In April, 1967, the administration and the allies presented the Soviet Union with this interpretation and warned that if the Kremlin *'took an official position in opposition to these interpretations, a very serious problem would arise'*.⁷⁴⁵ The Soviet Union did not publicly protest.

The NPT was signed in July, 1968, and with the NPT the Johnson administration had both created a new framework to turn Germany into (although the German's did not sign the treaty until 1975), and, in fact, confronted the essentially Gaullist idea of an independent European nuclear force. This also marked a final settlement of the nuclear problem, which the administration had struggled with since the MLF debacle in 1964. The NPT did not tamper with the nuclear consultation in the Alliance, maintained America's nuclear veto and the current organization, and prevented the Western Europeans from establishing an independent nuclear force. The NPT was to a large extent a protective measure against America's European allies, and the NPT's principles and articles, which pertained the transatlantic relations was the outcome of a policy of detachment.

⁷⁴² S/P, Jan. 30, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Staff, box 301, p. 37.

⁷⁴³ Memcon, Feb. 8, 1967. FRUS, 1964-1968 Vol. XI, Arms Control and Disarmament, doc. 180.

⁷⁴⁴ Fisher to Rusk, Feb. 25, 1967. FRUS Vol. XI, Arms Control and Disarmament, doc. 183.

⁷⁴⁵ Katzenbach to Clifford, Apr. 10, 1968. FRUS Vol. XI, Arms Control and Disarmament, doc. 232.

Reconciliation 1968?

Despite the NPT was a framework to tie the Germans into, the Grand Coalition's Eastern policies troubled the Department of State. In general, the department argued in the fall of 1967, that the new trend in German foreign policy had been on its way since 1966 – since the Grand Coalition took office. Although the department did see an abolition of the client state relation, and Germany's outreach to Eastern Europe and subsequent *Ostpolitik* as coinciding with American interests, the department still feared that the Western bloc might lose control over Germany. The new trend in German foreign policy also revealed itself in the renewed effort to improve relations with France.⁷⁴⁶ The Policy Planning Council speculated in the fall of 1967, if Germany in fact would pursue a neutralization of Germany to obtain unification.⁷⁴⁷ The perception of Germany was, in other words, not very different from the immediate post-War years – and not very different from the estimates of 1965-1966. As de Gaulle had blocked British entry into the EEC again, it was hardly surprising that the Department of State concluded in the spring of 1968, that European integration was not enough to tie Germany in.⁷⁴⁸

American relationship with France did not reach a new stage of accommodation after the French withdrawal from the integrated command in March, 1966. To the contrary, France had objected to the NPT as both another structure for the US to command and control Western Europe and a creation of a super power condominium in Europe. In the late summer of 1967 there were several estimates floating in the administration that de Gaulle would withdraw France from SEATO and NATO entirely, as de Gaulle's concept of alliance rested on the principle that the existence and necessity of alliances were directly related to the level of the threat, and by late 1967, the détente had created conditions for a complete French withdrawal. Coupled with the level of American hegemony in Western Europe, de Gaulle was set on creating irreversible situations according to a cross departmental line of thinking.⁷⁴⁹

Johnson announced his intention of not running for a second term as President in March, 1968, primarily because of the increasing public and Congressional critique of Johnson's Vietnam policies, an announcement that is often characterized as initiating a lame duck period in American

⁷⁴⁶ McGhee to ... Nov. 3, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council, box 301.

⁷⁴⁷ Policy Planning Council: Where can the Germans go?, Dec. 19, 1967. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council, box 301; Policy Planning Council: The Division of Germany, Nov. 6, 1967. Ibid.

⁷⁴⁸ Cleveland to Owen, Apr. 19, 1968. NARA, RG 59, Policy Planning Council, box 301.

⁷⁴⁹ CIA Memo, Oct. 6, 1967. LBJL, NSF, France, box 173; Rostow to Johnson, Aug. 9, 1967. Ibid.

politics, including the foreign policy. However, the Johnson administration was not that lame duckish in the foreign policy area during 1968.

As the nonproliferation negotiations had progressed throughout 1967 and the 1968, the administration had also launched a proposal for arms limitations talks in May, 1968, which would turn into the SALT negotiations during Nixon. The primary reason for the administration's failure to begin arms limitations talks, despite them being scheduled to begin with the Soviets, was not the Soviet intervention in Prague in August, 1968, but the President elect Richard Nixon's refusal to accompany LBJ to a summit with the Soviets on arms limitations.⁷⁵⁰

However, the Soviet intervention in Prague on August 20, 1968, did influence the transatlantic relations. The Johnson administration saw the Soviet intervention as a means to get the European allies to contribute with '*substantive inputs*' to the alliance by which the Department of State meant '*military forces and budgets*'.⁷⁵¹ Rusk urged that the Alliance did not call a high level ministers' meeting in the light of the Soviet intervention but rather began a process of consultation on how each NATO member could contribute to strengthen NATO.⁷⁵²

At a NSC meeting in September, 1968, Johnson asked his staff '*how we can use this crisis to strengthen Western European defense and NATO*'.⁷⁵³ Although France was reported to uphold the Gaullist foreign policy despite the intervention,⁷⁵⁴ the Department of State in general argued at the meeting that the effect on the European allies was substantial and that there was a '*real need to reassure the Alliance*'.⁷⁵⁵ At the NSC meeting there was a cross departmental agreement that the crisis was an opportunity for the US to find out if the European allies were ready to carry a fair share of the burdens in NATO, and Clifford, the new Secretary of Defense, argued hawkishly that '*we must use the crisis to prompt NATO states to improve quality of their troops and to improve their mobilization potential. We should push hard on the Germans to increase their budgets, we should request more from NATO members*'.⁷⁵⁶ Moreover, Clifford argued, that NATO members should react promptly by calling a meeting between NATO's defense and foreign ministers to assess the Soviet threat.⁷⁵⁷ Fowler, the Secretary of Treasury, interjected that '*It is well to recall that the Berlin crisis led to the first agreement by a NATO member to offset our military*

⁷⁵⁰ Dumbrell (2004), p.46-54.

⁷⁵¹ Rusk to foreign ministers UK, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, and Canada Aug. 20, 1968. LBJL, NSF, France, box 174.

⁷⁵² Rusk to foreign ministers UK, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, and Canada Aug. 20, 1968. LBJL, NSF, France, box 174.

⁷⁵³ NSC mtg, Sep. 4, 1968. LBJL, NSC meetings file, box 2.

⁷⁵⁴ INR + CIA

⁷⁵⁵ NSC mtg, Sep. 4, 1968. LBJL, NSC meetings file, box 2.

⁷⁵⁶ NSC mtg, Sep. 4, 1968. LBJL, NSC meetings file, box 2.

⁷⁵⁷ NSC mtg, Sep. 4, 1968. LBJL, NSC meetings file, box 2.

expenditures in Europe'.⁷⁵⁸ Johnson rebuked Clifford, and argued that there should be no 'hurry-up meeting' and that there was '*no need to restate our commitments*' to the Germans. Instead Germany should take action on '*some thing we want them to do*',⁷⁵⁹ and then the US could reassure the Germans. Although the allies had already agreed to assess the implications of the Soviet intervention on the NATO's defense policy, '*in particular force postures*', Johnson argued in line with Rusk that it was important to, in terms of the European allies, know what they were going to do by means of consultation, thus reflecting the long held conviction that the European allies potentially could drift. Indeed, despite the administration was quite convinced that the European allies were frightened by the Soviet intervention, the administration recorded that the allies continued to favor negotiations with the Soviet Union, and had upheld trade deals with Eastern Europe. The allies' continued détente effort was further highlighted by de Gaulle's continued Gaullist foreign policy and Germany's continued development of an Eastern policy.

The Johnson administration did, in fact, see the Czech crisis as an opportunity to further consolidate the alliance not only by means of offset and force contributions, which was also motivated by a financial overburdening of the US, but also by reassuring the allies about the American commitment to Western Europe's defense. At the NSC meeting it was discussed how the US could extend the 'life' of the treaty beyond 1969 at this point in time. Naturally these considerations also reflected that there was, according to the Johnson administration, a real need to reassure the allies.

In the end the Johnson administration succeeded with 'strengthening' the alliance. NATO adopted a Final Communiqué in November, 1968, stating that the allies '*consider that the situation arising from recent events calls for a collective response. The quality, effectiveness, and deployment of NATO's forces will be improved in terms of both manpower and equipment*'⁷⁶⁰ and '*they also acknowledge that the solidarity of the Alliance can be strengthened by co-operation between the members to alleviate burdens arising from balance of payments deficits resulting specifically from military expenditures for the collective defence*'.⁷⁶¹ Moreover, the European allies were called into line as the Communiqué read that as peaceful relations between East and West remained an objective, the allies would be, in their pursuance of peaceful relations, '*bear[ing] in mind*

⁷⁵⁸ NSC mtg, Sep. 4, 1968. LBJL, NSC meetings file, box 2.

⁷⁵⁹ NSC mtg, Sep. 4, 1968. LBJL, NSC meetings file, box 2.

⁷⁶⁰ Final Communiqué, Nov. 16. 1968.

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_26736.htm

⁷⁶¹ Final Communiqué, Nov. 16. 1968.

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_26736.htm

that the pursuit of détente must not be allowed to split the Alliance,⁷⁶² in return the allies was granted that *'By its constitution the Alliance is of indefinite duration. Recent events have further demonstrated that its continued existence is more than ever necessary.'*⁷⁶³

Lastly the communiqué also revealed France's catch 22, indeed *'The foreign minister of France recalled that, for its part, unless events in the years to come were to bring about a radical change in East-West relations, the French government considers that the Alliance must continue as long as it appears to be necessary.'*⁷⁶⁴

The deal was sealed at NATO's Defence Planning Committee's ministerial session in January, 1969, when a new NATO force plan was adopted.⁷⁶⁵ The Czechoslovakian crisis did reconcile the allies' policy outlook.

Brief Conclusions

The years 1966-1968 saw a Johnson administration which was increasingly preoccupied, in the relations with the European allies, with maintaining and re-cementing over and over again the allies' adherence to NATO's fundamental principles of integration and deterrence, thus reflecting a certain perception of the European reason of state. In this process the administration, the Department of State in particular, was focused on consolidating the alliance as a means to control the allies' policies and at the same time protecting US interests and foreign policy from Western European direct or indirect interference, a line of thinking, which rested on a rejection of the European reason of state. Moreover, the administration recognized that the Allies wanted equality, however, rejected to 'confer' equality in the Alliance lest it be to a united Western Europe.

The years 1966-1968 were the years during which the Johnson administration, the Department of State in particular, created the conditions in the transatlantic relations that made it possible for the US to conduct a policy of detachment in NATO's political area. The administration believed it was compelled to move the Alliance into to political area to accommodate the allies since the French withdrawal from NATO's integrated command in 1966.

The policy of detachment was reinforced or completed with the adoption of the Harmel Study's principles for the organization of the

⁷⁶² Final Communiqué, Nov. 16. 1968.

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_26736.htm

⁷⁶³ Final Communiqué, Nov. 16. 1968.

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_26736.htm

⁷⁶⁴ Final Communiqué, Nov. 16. 1968.

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_26736.htm

⁷⁶⁵ Final Communiqué Jan. 16, 1969.

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_26757.htm

political cooperation between the US and the European allies. The benchmarks, which the administration urged Subgroup 1 to formulate served to on one hand, keeping America's relationship with the Soviet Union protected from direct or indirect interference from the European allies, and on the other hand, securing American presence and influence on a European settlement. How to protect America's relations with the Soviet Union from the Allies' policies had continued to be a primary subject of study in the Department of State in 1967. The only area in which the administration did not succeed at the Harmel exercise was with establishing some sort of 'sense of responsibility' in the European allies in global affairs. France was considered by the administration as a separate problem at the Harmel exercise, and the Department of State feared that de Gaulle would use the exercise as a pretext to withdraw from the Alliance. However, the administration's fears proved unfounded and perhaps even exaggerated.

The Non Proliferation Treaty was in terms of America's relations with the European allies also a final settlement of the nuclear problem, and the establishment of principles, upon which the US could continue the policy of detachment in the nuclear field. The successor state principle solved the problem with the European clause, and, in fact, confronted the Gaullist claim to an independent European nuclear force. Moreover, the NPT served to control the new West German assertiveness.

Although the administration had succeeded with the Harmel study to bring home to the allies the need for deterrence, the Soviet intervention in Prague in August, 1968, served the purpose of further reconciling US and allied policies in this area. The administration took the opportunity to further push the allies to contribute substantially to uphold the credible deterrent, and in some ways, the Soviet invasion served to reconcile the policy outlooks of Western Europe and America.

Chapter 8 Perspectives the Nixon-Ford Administration in Comparison, 1973-1975

Introduction

The Johnson administration's policies and perceptions of Western Europe were to a large extent based on a certain traditionalist approach to Western Europe and NATO. The Johnson administration reasoned upon this line of thinking that the US should both protect the unilateralist position the US currently had and had held since the inception of NATO in 1949, and protect its policy towards the Soviet Union from Western European direct or indirect interferences. Seemingly the Johnson administration's policies towards Western Europe was an effort to on one hand control or align the allies to US policy objectives, while at the same time preserve US unilateralism.

Was this line of thinking traditional Democratic or a generic American way of looking at Western Europe during the Cold War? Is the continuum of involvement and detachment a methodological grip that is meaningful beyond the Johnson administration? In the first place to encompass a republican mindset?

An answer is attempted by comparing the Johnson administrations' policies towards the European allies with that of the republican Nixon and Ford administrations in the period 1969-1975.

A first glance the Nixon- Ford administration's policies towards the European allies suggests that there were similarities between the Democratic Johnson administration's relations with and policies towards the European allies and the Republican Nixon-Ford administration's policies. This despite the fact that things had truly changed in Western Europe by the time Nixon came into office in January, 1969.

Western Europe: Ruptures and Continuities

The premises for America's policies towards Western Europe and relations with the European allies that the Johnson administration had based its policies and perceptions on had changed. The political landscape in Western Europe in the 1970s was quite different than the landscape of the 1960s. Indeed, the central issues of the 1960s were largely resolved or had evaporated by the time Nixon took office in January, 1969.

After de Gaulle's departure from French politics in April, 1969, Gaullism was no longer the guiding principle for French relations with the rest of the world. Pompidou was more pragmatic than de Gaulle, as the French acceptance of British entry into the EC was a token of. De Gaulle, Gaullism, and the spread of Gaullist ideas, all of which the

Johnson administration had considered a primary problem for America's policy towards Western Europe therefore no longer existed. Indeed, the ultimate Gaullist objective to create a 'European Europe' and in the process get rid of America and the fear of spread of Gaullist ideas in the Alliance and in West Germany in particular, were no longer scenarios upon which the American administration could base its policy towards Western Europe.

In the same manner the question of Germany's orientation no longer had an alarmist aura because West German politics had changed. As discussed in Chapter 3, the struggle between Atlanticism and Gaullism was mostly fought during the Erhard Chancellorship (1963-1966), and largely faded under the Grand Coalition (1966-1969). By the time Brandt took over in 1969, the German Gaullists were a minority, and – in addition -- there were a significant popular and political backing to the Atlanticist orientation. The Brandt administration's *Ostpolitik* also brought resolution to the central question of what approach West Germany should take towards German unity, which had caused the Johnson administration grievance and grounds for wild speculations about the future orientation of West Germany, as discussed in Chapter 6 and 7 in particular. Although the Nixon administration did not receive the Brandt administration and the West German *Ostpolitik* with unqualified enthusiasm,⁷⁶⁶ the fundamental insecurity about West Germany's approach to German unity was no longer a premise for the formulation of America's policies.

With the departure of a strong Gaullist voice in both France and West Germany, America's nuclear monopoly were no longer contested, as it had been throughout the 1960s. McNamara's Nuclear Planning Group, the Nonproliferation Treaty and the successor state principle had also helped closing the issue by the time Nixon entered the White House.

The Johnson administration's insecurities about European allies' adherence to NATO's fundamental principles had largely passed as the NATO treaty was up for renewal in 1969, and all 15 allies had renewed the adherence to NATO. Although France remained outside the integrated command system, France's adherence to NATO was steadfast. The Ailleret-Lemnitzer accords of 1967, resolved that in time of East-West hostility and war France would cooperate militarily with the Alliance. The French claimed that with the accords, the situation, in fact, differed very little from the situation before the French withdrawal from the integrated command in March, 1966.⁷⁶⁷

⁷⁶⁶ Garthoff (1985) p. 109.

⁷⁶⁷ Bozo in Haftendorn, Helga, Soutou, Georges Henri, Wells Jr., Samuel F. (eds.) (2006) p. 115.

In other words, the central issues of the 1960s that had been imperative for the Johnson administration's formulation of policies towards Western Europe, and the administration's perceptions of the state of America's relations with the European allies, no longer existed. Indeed, by 1974, according to Hanhimäki, there was somewhat of a turn in Western European politics towards Atlanticism,⁷⁶⁸ which arguably prevented the state of alarm of the 1960s.

The European Community also overcame the strains of the 1960s. De Gaulle's departure resulted in the very first round of enlargement, and Britain, Denmark, and Ireland became members of the Community in January, 1973. Moreover, the EC moved to develop a common foreign policy. Indeed, during the CSCE negotiations, the EC 9, to some extent, acted as an entity with common positions on central issues. The integration process was, in other words, no longer stalled.

However, there were also continuities in Western Europe. Most significant, the Western European détente movement continued undaunted, and the general move to greater political independence from the US continued as the allies' behavior during the CSCE process revealed. The political and economic rehabilitation, which was a precondition for this independence, was a matter of fact already in the 1960s and certainly by the 1970s during the Nixon and Ford administrations, despite the passing insecurities about the degree of independence from the US in the wake of the Prague Spring in 1968. These insecurities were indeed passing, especially as NATO remained the guarantor of Western Europe's security.

The question is whether this very different situation in the 1970s in Western Europe had an effect on America's policies and relations with Western Europe?

The Constitution of America's Western European policy 1970s

Institutional Structures

The formulation of the Nixon administration's foreign policy was contrary to the Johnson administration's foreign policy exclusively in the hands of the President and the National Security Advisor; Kissinger (at least until Kissinger became Secretary of State in 1974). Although the Department of State continued its day to day management of US relations with the world, the department lacked the authority of the White House and was informally stripped of its power to formulate and

⁷⁶⁸ Hanhimäki (2003) p. 49.

conduct foreign policy on a greater scale. Indeed, Kissinger's NSA institution effectively occupied America's foreign policy.⁷⁶⁹

This institutional shift from the practice of the Johnson administration is partly explained by Kissinger and Nixon's foreign policy philosophy of creating a superpower equilibrium, and coupled with the diplomatic style, the so-called linkage strategy, US unilateralism was perceived as a precondition for the success of US foreign policy.

The Nixon administration's Foreign Policy Observations

Although it is commonly held that the Johnson administration was mostly occupied with the Vietnam War at least after the escalations in 1964, the preceding Chapters are a token of a certain preoccupation with preserving and securing America's most central alliance; NATO and in general the Atlantic partnership. By the time Nixon took over, the foreign policy focus was however, on Vietnam and how to end the war.⁷⁷⁰

The Vietnam War had by 1969 effectively broken the explanatory force of the Cold War paradigm, and the bipartisan foreign policy no longer existed. The global containment and the domino theory, which had guided the Johnson administration's policy towards Vietnam, had broken down gradually in the last years of Johnson's Presidency, and with the Nixon Doctrine the new administration reintroduced a hierarchy of interest in American foreign policy. In essence the Nixon Doctrine came about as a consequence of the loss of the bipartisanship, a loss which indeed had been motivated by a domestic rejection of the global scope of America's commitments.

The doctrine stipulated that the US (of course) remained committed to the treaty obligations and the nuclear deterrent, but was not committed to fight communism everywhere. This line of thinking was a break with the global containment policy's zero-sum calculations of power of the previous administrations, including Johnson's. The Nixon administration believed that communism could gain territory for instance in the Third World without it necessarily affected the East-West balance.⁷⁷¹ This also reflected that the new administration's thinking on the post-War structures, in fact, entailed a recognition that the US could not continue to sustain these structures endlessly. The overextension of America had become a reality. The administration let the Bretton Woods system collapse in 1973, as the administration recognized the extent of the global overextension.

⁷⁶⁹ Garthoff (1985) p. 26-27.

⁷⁷⁰ Garthoff (1985) p. 248.

⁷⁷¹ Dobson & Marsh (2006) p. 41; Del Pero (2010) p. 82.

However, this seemingly new thinking about the balance of the world and America's place in it was, according to Del Pero, 'compulsory' and Del Pero claims that Humphrey, the Democratic candidate and Johnson's Vice President, would have chosen a similar path for America's foreign policy if he had won the election in 1968.⁷⁷² This is not entirely unfounded, as the Johnson administration in fact did move to end the Vietnam War in an 'honorable way' and indeed did pursue the arms limitation talks despite the Soviet clamp down in Prague. Clearly this had to do with Johnson being preoccupied with his legacy; however, the fact was that the Johnson administration pursued these goals based on genuine political choice. Indeed, Nixon's opening to China had, in fact, been contemplated in the Johnson administration.⁷⁷³

In the same manner as Nixon and Kissinger re-thought the extent of US commitments; the White House also re-thought and in the end re-introduced the hierarchy of interest in US foreign policy.⁷⁷⁴ However, the extent of new thinking was limited. The relations with the Soviet Union remained the primary interest, and the objective remained containment of the Soviet Union and communism in a continued bipolar world. Despite the talk about triangular diplomacy and pentagonal structures, Kissinger and Nixon believed that the bipolar structure should be maintained as it served US interests best.⁷⁷⁵ Indeed, Kissinger contemplated that the primary adversary measured on military power, which was, given Kissinger's realist convictions, the only parameter for power, remained the Soviet Union.⁷⁷⁶ Moreover, according to Del Pero, the real invention in the US foreign policy was the discourse used to explain and justify the American foreign policy. As in the previous administrations, the need for a foreign policy consensus was considered important, and with the breakdown of the Cold War paradigm, the incoming administration had to build a new consensus.⁷⁷⁷

Kissinger thus sought to build a superpower equilibrium based on the belief that bi-polarism was the most meaningful organization of the relationship between the two superpowers. Indeed, Kissinger retreated from the idea that the Soviet Union could be overthrown or the Cold

⁷⁷² Del Pero (2010), p. 77-78.

⁷⁷³ See Dumbrell (2004) for the administrations relations with the USSR and efforts to end the Vietnam War.

⁷⁷⁴ It is still debated who in fact formulated the 'new' foreign policy -- Kissinger or Nixon? Most likely no one man (Kissinger) can be attributed singlehandedly the reformulation of foreign policy. For more on Kissingerology (Historiography on Kissinger) see Hanhimäki (2003a).

⁷⁷⁵ Garthoff (1985).

⁷⁷⁶ Dobson & Marsh (2006) p. 42; Del Pero (2010) p. 80-81. Del Pero argues that Kissinger wanted to preserve the bipolar system however; this did not mean preservation of the containment policy. Dobson and Marsh claim that Kissinger and Nixon continued the containment policy in its original meaning, i.e., not the global variant of NSC 68. This text refers to Dobson and Marsh's reading of containment.

⁷⁷⁷ Del Pero (2010) p. 80.

War won, and set out to build this structure as a meaningful organization of this relationship in the 1970s, and the policy to this end was détente. The Nixon administration's détente policy towards the Soviet Union, it was believed at least, would draw the Soviet Union into this new state of balance in the relationship and add a certain and necessary legitimization to the equilibrium, through for instance arms reductions agreements. The US was however, still depicted as the leading power in this equilibrium. This essentially structural interdependence would in the long run establish a far more intimate relationship between the Kremlin and Washington, in fact, the Nixon administration attempted a code of conduct the so-called 'Basic Principles of Relations Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' of 1972.⁷⁷⁸ Apart from the quest to provide legitimacy to the superpower equilibrium, the Nixon administration was driven by, like the preceding administration, the pursuance of the ultimate goal of avoiding a nuclear war.⁷⁷⁹

The primacy of the superpower relations in the Nixon administration's thinking also meant a stern belief that détente was a matter between the US and the USSR. Kissinger's diplomacy the so-called linkage, and with this strategy, Kissinger aimed at binding the Soviet Union into the superpower equilibrium, and yet place the US in a central position, from which it was possible to uphold the containment of communism.⁷⁸⁰ With linkage Kissinger conditioned resolution of different areas of negotiations upon each other to force concession upon the Soviets, such as the linkage of the CSCE and SALT negotiations. The linkage strategy also highlights a certain amount of pragmatism in the Nixon administration's foreign policy because linkage, in fact, allowed tradeoffs.⁷⁸¹

In comparison with the Johnson administrations foreign policy and more specific the policy towards the Soviet Union, the Nixon administration's foreign policy was, as a matter of fact, in several ways a continuance of the Johnson administration's line of thinking at least towards the Soviet Union. Although the Nixon administration's negotiations on arms limitations and détente with USSR had been under way during the Johnson Presidency, it now became the constitution of US foreign policy. Moreover, the Johnsons administration's urge and effort to protect and preserve America's unilateralism in the West's

⁷⁷⁸ Basic Principles of Relations Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=3438>

⁷⁷⁹ Del Pero (2010) p. 83; Dobson & Marsh (2006) p. 42; Garthoff (1985) p. 29-30; Schwartz (2003). Schwartz argues that this indeed was a primary driving force of Johnson, and it goes almost exclusively as the explanation for LBJ administration quest for detente with the Soviet Union. See Chapter 2.

⁷⁸⁰ Del Pero (2010) p. 87; Dobson & Marsh (2006) p. 42; Garthoff (1985) p. 31-33.

⁷⁸¹ Dobson & Marsh (2006) p. 42-43; Del Pero (2010).

dealings with the Soviet Union became the central principle for America's foreign policy with the Nixon administration. However, the ideational foundation for these policies and objectives was different. The Johnson administration believed in the global containment, domino theory, and the Cold War paradigm, and that it was possible to overcome communism – to transform communism from within to which end détente was applied. Nixon and Kissinger's thinking was a complete retreat from this belief, and détente was turned into a strategy to achieve peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union. The question remains if and how this largely ideational break with Johnsonian thinking affected US policies towards the European allies and the relations with the allies?

Nixon's Western European policy

The primacy the White House attached to bilateralism and the need for an organization of a superpower equilibrium in the foreign policy resulted in, on one hand a wish to freeze the status quo of Europe, and on the other hand it resulted in an inherent opposition to any autonomous Western European initiatives that would affect the establishment of the superpower equilibrium, and the very modus operandi of the superpower relations.⁷⁸² The Nixon administration's approach to the European allies was, in other words, preservation of US unilateralism in America's dealings with the Soviet Union, and pursuance of influence on the allies' policies at least those that affected the superpower balance.

The problem with the Nixon administration's policy to create the superpower equilibrium was that the European allies had aspirations and incentives to continue the Euro-détente, which necessarily would involve the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the allies had, as in the 1960s, an intrinsic interest in the matters of arms control and more broadly in the peaceful relations between the superpowers. The lesson from the crisis year; the extent to which Western Europe's destiny was intrinsically linked to the superpower relationship, was not forgotten. Arguably the lesson had become the inherent premise for Western Europe's foreign policies. In other words, the European allies' détente policies would per definition clash with the Nixon administration's quest to create the superpower equilibrium. Moreover, it would clash with the linkage strategy. As Garthoff argues, the linkage strategy failed to recognize that the different elements of policy are not easily controlled. Indeed, the efforts to 'manipulate' the Soviets time and again came up against the interests of the allies.⁷⁸³

⁷⁸² Del Pero (2010) p. 85.

⁷⁸³ Garthoff (1985) p. 33.

The CSCE was a prime example of just that. The CSCE process had many similarities to the developments of the latter half of the 1960s, and was, in fact, a continuation of on one hand, the Euro-détente and the reformed NATO agenda, and on the other hand, a continuation or illumination of the new role NATO was assigned, in the Johnsonian mind, in the East-West relations.

In general the CSCE came about as a result of the European détente movement. On the Western side of the Iron Curtain the European allies' call to move the Alliance to a détente with the Eastern bloc, and the Harmel formula of détente and deterrence was a precondition for the CSCE. Arguably, the European allies' adherence to a strong deterrence was a precondition for any American backing to the European allies' talk with the Warsaw Pact. On the Eastern side of the Iron Curtain, the Soviet Union was under increasing pressure from the Warsaw Pact members and Eastern Europe's continued strive for some sort of independence from the Kremlin. The Warsaw Pact's Budapest Appeal of March, 1969, which resulted in the commencement of the CSCE, was a result of these centrifugal tendencies in the Eastern bloc. The USSR believed that a conference on the relations between Eastern and Western Europe could counter this development, and the Kremlin recognized that without admitting the US into these negotiations on cooperation and security in Europe, there could be no such negotiations. As the Kremlin came to recognize this in the late 1960s the path for a conference on security and cooperation in Europe was paved.⁷⁸⁴ With the Appeal of March 17, 1969, the Warsaw Pact called for a conference and invited the US to take part in the negotiations. The Western European states immediately embraced the Appeal.

American Motives for Commencing the CSCE, 1969-1972

Although the Johnson administration had succeeded with getting the European allies to re-commit to the fundamental principles of the Alliance, and established measures that was presumed would counter alliance disintegration and cement alliance cohesion, the continued Western European détente movement and the continued Western European criticism of the Vietnam War threatened, according to Hanhimäki, to strain the Atlantic Alliance, at least in the eyes of the incoming Nixon administration. Much along the same lines as both the State Department and the White House thinking on Western Europe's relations with Eastern Europe during the 1960s, which led to the Bridge Building policies, Kissinger feared (in hindsight) that if the US did not respond to the allies' calls for a détente, the US *'risked being isolated within*

⁷⁸⁴ Hanhimäki (2003) p. 39.

the Alliance and pushing Europe toward neutralism'.⁷⁸⁵ In the end, after some hesitation the US agreed to participate in the CSCE conference, however mostly out of necessity.

Indeed, as discussed in Chapters 5 and 7, in 1964 and again in 1966 the US Bridge Building policies had been driven partly by the fact that the US was lacking behind its European allies in the relations with the Eastern bloc, which, it was believed, isolated the US within the alliance, and partly by the belief that if this Western European bilateralism continued, Europe would evolve into something foreign to American interests.

The alliance was also strained, according to Hanhimäki, by divergence of views on the war in Vietnam. As discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, the US increasingly came to see the European allies' policies and behavior towards the out of treaty areas as a problem and although the Johnson administration had pursued a first step in getting the European allies to take global responsibility and essentially back America's global containment at the Harmel exercise in 1967, the administration had not succeeded.

By the time the Budapest Appeal arrived in 1969, the Western European allies immediately embraced the idea. The different Western European states had national interests at stake however; the Budapest Appeal fitted quite well to the continued European détente movement, and, as discussed in Chapter 7, different Western European states had in fact called for some sort of initiative, which would facilitate a dialogue between the two halves of Europe in the late 1960s. Moreover, the Western European public opinion was strongly in favor of steps to lessen tension in Europe, and, according to Snyder, especially the UK was driven by this motif.⁷⁸⁶ This European idealism was however, not the only motivation for Western Europe; it was widely believed that Western Europe could gain strategically by the negotiations.

The situation the Nixon administration faced was therefore quite similar to the situation the Johnson administration confronted the moment it came to believe that Western Europe would not mind bypassing the US in the outreach to the Eastern bloc, and that Western Europe pursued a détente with the Eastern bloc no matter how much it contrasted or even obstructed the, by the US formulated, overall foreign policy goal of the Atlantic alliance.

Although the Nixon administration strived for a détente with the Soviet Union, a multilateral conference on security and cooperation in Europe was not the administration's policy of choice. The Nixon administration sought to continue the detente with the Soviet Union the

⁷⁸⁵ Hanhimäki (2003) p. 39.

⁷⁸⁶ Snyder in Schulz & Schwartz (2010) p. 259.

Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT) that proceeded from November 1969 to May, 1972 and the subsequent negotiations on Mutually Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) that began in 1973, and ended inconclusively in 1989, was the Nixon administration's primary foreign policy objectives in the area of détente. The SALT negotiations were an exclusive US-USSR affair, though to the benefit of the rest of the world, and the MBFR was regarded by Kissinger at least as a bilateral affair. Nixon and Kissinger realized that the administration's unilateral approach to the Soviet Union would most likely come under pressure from the CSCE negotiations, thus despite Kissinger rejected the 'multilateral mushiness' of the contemplated CSCE,⁷⁸⁷ America had no choice but to participate in the endeavor.

Moreover, the Budapest Appeal put a dual pressure on Nixon and Kissinger to agree to convene the conference. On one hand the European allies embraced the appeal of a conference on European security and on the other hand, the Soviet Union, from which Kissinger was seeking concessions, had a strong interest in the very same endeavor.

All this led to the curious situation that the Nixon administration agreed to participate in the CSCE to, according to Hanhimäki and Snyder, accommodate the European allies and America's primary adversary; the USSR.⁷⁸⁸ However, not to reach the same objectives as these parties set out to reach an agreement on, namely European security and cooperation but out of necessity. Clearly, the Soviet Union like the rest of the participating states had specific more or less ulterior motives at the conference, but none lacked a genuine interest as did the US in the very subject of the conference, namely the organization of European security, indeed, principles that would govern East-West relations.⁷⁸⁹

Although Hanhimäki and Snyder argue that the Nixon administration accommodated the European allies' wishes to counter a fragmented or a strained alliance, the Nixon administration also moved to control the allies in their dealings with the Eastern bloc, in an American effort to protect the bilateral US-USSR détente process. If anything was done on part of the Nixon administration to accommodate the Western Europeans it was the Year of Europe initiative of 1973.

Arguably, this apparent lack of interest in the real issue is not completely unexplainable. As Hanhimäki argues, the US was faced with a potentially explosive situation: on one hand being too accommodating to the USSR that could result in a transatlantic crisis, on the other hand, being too little accommodating towards the Soviet Union that could result in a break down in the SALT negotiations. Thus a certain US restraint was demanded from the situation. However, Hanhimäki's

⁷⁸⁷ Quoted from Hanhimäki (2003).

⁷⁸⁸ Snyder in Schulz & Schwartz (2010) p. 259-60; Hanhimäki (2003) p. 37.

⁷⁸⁹ Snyder in Schulz & Schwartz (2010) p. 257.

argument borders apologetic interpretation, as Kissinger's unilateralist behavior in this line of thinking translates into (excellent) statesmanship rather than unilateralist behavior without any reciprocity despite being in an alliance, perhaps even based on distrust in the European allies' political capabilities under the present circumstances. Nonetheless, the Nixon administration thus balanced between the allies and the adversary.

The Year of Europe was designed to overcome the strains in the Alliance that had resulted from American unilateralism in the dealings with the Soviet Union, and also to underpin that the Western alliance indeed was as important as previously. The administration also wanted to 'revitalize' the transatlantic relations, according to Hanhimäki, because the EC had been enlarged, in particular with the British entry.⁷⁹⁰

The Year of Europe turned out to be a fiasco, and the European allies saw it as an expression of the very unilateralism that the US sought to address and make somewhat acceptable with the Year of Europe. In Kissinger's speech announcing the initiative, Kissinger managed to offend all and sundry in Western Europe, by stressing that the US had global responsibilities and interests, whereas the European allies only had regional interests. Responsibilities were apparently exclusively reserved to the US. In Western Europe this message ultimately translated into on one hand, confirmation that there were no equality in the Alliance, and on the other hand, that nothing had changed in the transatlantic relations. Indeed, British Prime Minister Heath complained to former NSA Rostow that the US '*must stop treating Europe as a group of nations that can be issued public instructions. Europe must be treated as a serious partner*'.⁷⁹¹

Differences in the Western World, 1973-1975

From the outset the CSCE process was inhibited on the Western side by divergence of objectives, and divergence of approaches. Kissinger, who was heading US foreign policy leaving the Department of State to negotiate the CSCE without a mandate from the White House, had three objectives with the CSCE. First Kissinger wanted to use CSCE in a linkage scheme to get Soviet concessions in the SALT negotiations and later the MBFR talks. Second to accommodate the Western European allies to counter a crisis in the transatlantic relations, especially in the wake of the crisis the Year of Europe⁷⁹² had brought on, and third, to control the European allies to protect the bilateral negotiations from direct or indirect interferences from Western Europe. The linkage strategy was, as Garthoff argues, dependent on a certain allied

⁷⁹⁰ Hanhimäki (2003) p. 43.

⁷⁹¹ Quoted from Hanhimäki (2003) p. 44.

⁷⁹² Hanhimäki (2003) p. 38; Garthoff (1985) p. 119.

concurrence in means and ends. However, as Kissinger did not have a habit of consultation with the allies, allied concurrence was not readily available.⁷⁹³ The linkage of CSCE and SALT had the profound impact on the entire CSCE process that Kissinger, despite the presence of the State Department staff, slowed down the negotiations to leverage the Soviets.⁷⁹⁴

From the outset in 1972, Kissinger treated the CSCE peripherally, and the real and pressing issue remained the bilateral negotiations with the Soviet Union. Although this reflects the very unilateralist foreign policy, it also illuminates that the Nixon administration did not perceive the transatlantic relations or the state of affairs in Western Europe with the same state of alarm as did the Johnson administration. The central issues of the 1960s were, as discussed above, solved, leaving Western Europe's relations with the US in a somewhat peaceful state – at least compared to the 1960s. Arguably the failed Year of Europe initiative of 1973 had left the transatlantic relations in a strained state however; it did not reach the state of alarm as in the 1960s.

Kissinger entered the CSCE negotiations rather late, in July, 1974, mostly to speed up the negotiations as leverage in his SALT negotiations with the Soviet Union. Kissinger positioned himself as the mediator of the Western side,⁷⁹⁵ to take control with the European allies, and as a consequence of general concerns that the direction of the East-West détente process at the CSCE affected the direction of the détente the US had struck out. Kissinger was also motivated by the belief that reconciliation between Eastern and Western Europe might reduce the Western European allies' support for the military programs in NATO.⁷⁹⁶

The Western Europeans by contrast had a genuine interest in seeking a new agreement on cooperation and security in Europe, the West Germans for instance, guided by *Ostpolitik* had clear national interest in the border issue. In general, the Western European allies' embracement of multilateralism at the negotiations was in stark contrast to the unilateralist negotiations Kissinger pursued with the Soviet Union. Although the Western European states had difficulties with arriving at a common NATO position because of the divergent national interests, the European NATO allies in the end became the guarantor's of the West's collective interests in the preparation for the conference.⁷⁹⁷ Moreover, the EC became a caucus to coordinate positions.⁷⁹⁸ In general, Kissinger did not see a value with multilateral negotiation on a variety of issues,

⁷⁹³ Garthoff (1985) p. 33.

⁷⁹⁴ Hanhimäki (2003).

⁷⁹⁵ Hanhimäki (2003) p. 42 & 51.

⁷⁹⁶ Garthoff (1985) p. 476; Hanhimäki (2003) p. 51.

⁷⁹⁷ Snyder (2010), p. 261

⁷⁹⁸ Garthoff (1985) p. 476.

unlike the European allies that held the opinion that any concessions that the Soviets were willing to give was a benefit to the West.

The diverging importance attached to different détente measures was also striking. The Basket 3 provisions are a case in point. Kissinger believed that they had no real value compared to measures that involved the strategic balance, whereas the Europeans – or the British at least – regarded the Basket 3 provisions as regulating governments' relations with citizens and therefore, a highly valuable outcome, especially if the aim was to overcome communism.⁷⁹⁹

The gap between Western European adherence to multilateralist negotiations and American unilateralism illuminates the Nixon administration's reluctance to commit the US to a multilateral scheme, which inevitably would entail giving up freedom of action in the American policy towards the Soviet Union. Kissinger eventually acceded to the multilateral approach however, on the premise that the US was positioned as the key power and mediator between the Eastern and Western side.⁸⁰⁰ This did not merit to multilateralism.

When Nixon stepped down in August, 1974, and Ford took over linkage continued, and Kissinger still considered the entire CSCE process peripheral. When the Helsinki Final Act was signed in 1975 Kissinger – and Ford – remained skeptical of the true value of the Helsinki Final Act, and multilateral negotiations.⁸⁰¹

Perspectives

Although the 1970s differed on several parameters from the 1960s, there was also striking similarities.

The central issues of the 1960s, which the Johnson administration was confronted with and which had been imperative for the policies and perceptions of the transatlantic relations were largely gone by the time Nixon took office. In fact, important issues such as the preservation of America's nuclear monopoly and NATO's fundamental principles were no longer issues between America and the European allies. However, the Western European détente movement continued undaunted.

Although the Nixon administration to a large extent merely continued the détente process with the Soviet Union that the Johnson administration had launched, Nixon and Kissinger broke with past years politics on an ideational level. The somewhat idealist idea that communism could be overcome yielded for Kissinger's realism. However, either way; idealism or realism, US unilateralism in the relations with the Soviet Union was imperative for America's policies towards the Soviet Union. Apparently both administrations believed that

⁷⁹⁹ Hanhimäki (2003) p. 51-52.

⁸⁰⁰ Hanhimäki (2003) p. 40-42; Snyder (2010) p. 259.

⁸⁰¹ Hanhimäki (2003).

the European allies' interference or even influence on the policy towards the Soviet Union could be damaging to America's purposes.

The Johnson administration, as discussed throughout the preceding Chapters, was driven by – among other things – a rejection of the European reason of state. Kissinger and Nixon, without having studied the archival material, were likely driven by the same kind of Euro-skepticism. Clearly Nixon and Kissinger believed the US was superior in terms of political capabilities.

The foundered Year of Europe initiative displayed the administration's perception of Western Europe's political capabilities as something qualitative lesser. By stressing that Europe only had regional interests, and Western Europe was unfit for taking responsibility for (world) peace, compared to the US global interests and global responsibility for world peace (much to dislike of the Western European self-image), indeed, made Western Europe's political capabilities lesser than America's. It was also evident with the CSCE negotiations, which the European allies attached much importance to and believed was a means to gain political results that might help overcome the division of Europe, including the Basket 3 provisions, whereas Nixon/Kissinger believed the multilateral mushiness offered no possibilities for the West to win anything from the negotiations, in contrast to the bilateral negotiations the US had with the USSR.

However, given Nixon and Kissinger's realist convictions, the opinion that Western Europe had a lesser ability to influence events in world could be explained as a result of the fact that in a realist perception Western Europe lacked power to actual influence events.

However, it could be suggested that the continuum of involvement and detachment apply to both these administrations despite the much dissimilarity of the surrounding circumstances. Indeed, as long as a rejection of a European reason of state informs US policy towards the European allies it is possible to talk about either detachment or involvement.

Chapter 9 Conclusions

Throughout the 1960s France, West Germany, and different NATO allies sought to realign the status quo in the transatlantic relations by different means and with different strengths. In Western Europe, the crisis year 1961-1962 had sparked a movement of realignment of Western Europe vis-à-vis the US. The crisis year also prompted the Western European détente movement. Although these two movements are not easily separated, in fact, the Johnson administration perceived the European détente as realignment; the present study has sought to answer: What were the Johnson administration's perceptions and interpretations of this movement of realignment in the period 1963-1969?

From the point of departure that the US sought to maintain its unilateralist position in the alliance and more broadly in the Atlantic partnership, I hypothesize that the administration sought to maintain this position, not only as a function of its superpower status but also because the Johnson administration rejected the European reason of state. The rejection of the European reason of state was a historically based rejection of Europe's political capabilities in foreign policy. Thus, US unilateralism had a corollary of self-protection from Western Europe. The Western European realignments sparked questions about what principles NATO and more broadly the Atlantic partnership should be based on. As Hughes put forward; the choice was essentially between multilateralism and unilateralism.

In the literature on the transatlantic relations, the relations between the US and Western Europe is mostly considered as a series of conflict and cooperation. However, as a result of the inclusion of this historically based rejection of Europe's reason of state in the present study's analysis, a continuum of involvement and detachment is introduced to characterize America's policy towards the European allies. A policy of detachment refers to a policy towards the European allies that, as a result of the rejection of the European reason of state, guided the US towards a detachment from the allies, and vice-versa in the case of involvement. A policy of detachment did not stipulate a complete withdrawal from the Alliance, but rather dictated preservation of US unilateralism. As it turns out, in the present period, the US did not follow or was remotely close to a policy of involvement. The present study therefore also seeks to answer if the US political responses to the realignments essentially were involved or detached?

The present study rests on archival material from the central foreign policy-making departments in Washington.

The beginnings of the Western European realignments in 1963-1964 were recorded by the administration with potential alarm. De Gaulle was considered the primary culprit, and de Gaulle's rejection of the integration principle and critique of the nuclear arrangement in the Alliance were, in fact, a critique of America's post-War unilateralist position in the Alliance. The administration believed that if de Gaulle's ideas caught on in Western Europe it would merit to a return to traditional European power politics. The analysis shows that, from the beginning, the administration had a completely traditional reading of de Gaulle's critique, errand, and the potential results of Gaullist policy. INR and Rusk in particular believed that a lack of structures in Western Europe would result in a return to European power politics, and the administration therefore fostered a fear of the spread of Gaullism in 1963-1964 since this tampered with these structures. This fear would become imperative during the 1960s.

The administration also perceived the beginnings of a Western European challenge of America's relations with and policy towards the Soviet Union during 1964. The Erhard administration's calls for an approach to the German question, and the general Western European outreach to Eastern Europe tampered, in the eyes of the administration, with America's unilateralism in its relations with the Soviet Union, the American leadership of the Western world, and alliance cohesion.

The White House attempted to resolve the different problems the beginnings of the Western European realignments presented to America with a call for a policy towards Eastern – and Western Europe, with the so-called NSAM 304 of April, 1964. In response, the Department of State proposed the first bridge building policy. The analysis shows that the 1964 bridge building policy aimed at establishing a structure, within which the US could control and align the allies' policies towards Eastern Europe with the American objectives in Eastern Europe, and tie the German question into. NATO was enrolled as the primary instrument for these American ends, and was also a framework in which the US could maintain its unilateralist position.

Although, the 1964 bridge building policy was a failure, it created precedence for using NATO as a political instrument. At the same time, Western Europe actually pushed America onto a détente path in Europe.

The French challenge was indeed a challenge. Most of all to the foundations of America's policy towards the European allies, and a period of clarification of US political concepts and policy towards the European allies began in 1964-1965. The argument is made that, de Gaulle's rejection of the integration principle led the administration to reconsider and recapitulate the purpose with of the Alliance, and the American position on central issues, such as the integration principle. The analysis shows that, de Gaulle's rejection largely revived the

reasoning and perceptions of the late 1940s, as the administration in cross-departmental concurrence agreed that NATO served to balance Europe, and that the integration principle was the only thing standing between a return to European power politics and the current balanced Western Europe organized in a collective security scheme. The integration principle was also standing between Alliance cohesion and Alliance disintegration.

In the present study, the argument is made that, in fact, the challenge from de Gaulle became an exercise in how the administration could frame the rejection of the European reason of state anno the 1960s.

During 1965, preserving the integration principle and counter Alliance disintegration took forefront in the administration's thinking, and even though 1965 did not produce a solution, the clarification of the US position on means and purposes with the Alliance was a precondition for the solutions of 1966 in the wake of de Gaulle's withdrawal from the integrated command.

This clarification process in 1965 evolved around US unilateralism and the revived reasoning of the 1940s. Whereas INR touched upon the principal matter of unilateralism versus multilateralism in Alliance organization, the rest of the administration, the Departments of State and Defense, implicitly presumed that any scheme to counter Alliance disintegration would be based in a preservation of US unilateralism, and therefore the departments rejected multilateralism as an organizing principle for the relations in the Alliance. The argument is made that, because NATO was seen as an instrument to hinder a return to European power politics, the unilateralism, which both departments implicitly presumed should be preserved in the Alliance structure was ultimately protective. .

According to the present study, the clarification process also revealed that at least INR saw a triple purpose with the Alliance. Apart from regulating the allies' policies according to America's interests, expand the geographical area for coordination of policies to the so-called out of treaty areas, INR also claimed that NATO should be used to regulate the relations between Eastern and Western Europe.

By 1965 Johnson had directed a new policy in the nuclear field, which essentially was a policy of detachment. With NSAM 322 of December, 1964, Johnson declared that the US should work against the spread of nuclear weapons in general, and in Western Europe in particular. This policy of disarming Western Europe and nonproliferation took its point of departure in the maintenance of the American veto, and the policy is partly explained in the study as a result of an American rejection of the European reason of state, indeed, Western Europe's could not be trusted with nuclear weapons. This latter perspective was further highlighted by the NSAMs rejection of the

European clause and indeed, any American commitment to discuss a revision of the prohibition of Western European nuclear weapons should circumstances in Western Europe change in the future.

It was not until 1966 shortly after de Gaulle's withdrawal from the integrated command that the administration found a solution to the problem of getting the European allies to recommit to the integration principle, and thereby prevent a return to European power politics. 1966 was arguably a formative year for America's policy towards the European allies. This was partly brought on as a result of substantial Western European calls for increased political consultation in the Alliance and a move towards a *détente* with the East.

In the present study, the argument is made that the administration made a 'political bargain' and moved the Alliance into the political field to get the allies to commit to the integration principle. By granting the Allies political consultation, though without compromising US unilateralism, and accommodating Western European wishes for both a *détente* with the Eastern bloc and more political consultation in the Alliance, the administration believed they could get the European allies to recommit to the integration principle.

The 'political bargain' was followed by the Acheson Committee's recommendation. In the present study's reading the Acheson Committee recommended that to counter the perceived alliance disintegration in the wake of the French withdrawal, the US should move the alliance to a *détente* with the Eastern bloc while at the same time maintain an adequate deterrence. I argue that, in fact, the Acheson Committee proposes the formula of *détente* and deterrence in June, 1966, which Belgian foreign minister Harmel would propose four months later. Contrary to Harmel, the American administration proposed this to preserve NATO, and American unilateralism rather than as a genuine outreach to the Eastern bloc.

'The political bargain' and the Acheson Committee's *détente* and deterrence formula rested on certain assumptions about Western Europe's capabilities in foreign policy, namely that without this principle and American leadership of the alliance, Western Europe would return to a state of power politics. In the present study the argument is made that this fundamental rejection of the European reason of state in the core of the recommendations, makes the *détente* and deterrence formula a policy of detachment towards Western Europe. Moreover, the argument is made that the policies of 1966 also sought to protect America's unilateralism in the policy towards the Soviet Union from Western European direct or indirect interference despite the administration granted political consultation. The administration, in fact, contemplated to grant 'multilateralism', i.e., political consultation, without jeopardizing US unilateralism.

Given the developments in 1966; the French withdrawal and the calls for a détente with Eastern Europe via NATO made in the wake of the French withdrawal by the British, the Dutch, and the Belgians, and even before the withdrawal by the Danes and the British, coupled with the fear of alliance disintegration put Johnson's October 7th speech in a different light, indeed, the argument is made, that Johnson merely responded to these developments in Western Europe that had been under way since 1964, rather than presenting new, bold thinking. The administration was re-active rather than proactive. Moreover, by 1966 NATO's policy was arguably 'europeanized'.

The German question also arrived more forcefully on the agenda in 1965-1966. The Erhard administration and the rest of the European allies had come to regard a solution to the German problem as a matter of national interest, and sought a solution to the problem in a multilateral setting. This was according to the present study an expression of the greater movement of realignment in Western Europe, and as 1966 passed, the problem of German 'assertiveness' arrived at the agenda in Washington.

The argument is made that during 1967-1968 the Johnson administration sought to re-cement the Alliance's fundamental principles, and the Department of State in particular was preoccupied with consolidating the Alliance as a means to control the allies' policies and protect the American unilateralism. The analysis shows that the Department of State moved to (finally) create premises for the new area of political cooperation in NATO that allowed for the US to conduct a policy of detachment. The benchmarks, which was agreed upon with the Harmel study was a means to this end. The benchmarks marked the fine balance between political consultation and US unilateralism. At the same time as the benchmarks protected the American policy towards the Soviet Union from the Western European allies' interference, they also codified American influence on the vital issue of a European settlement. The US to a large extent succeeded at the Harmel exercise, indeed, the allies recommitted to the integration principle and therefore a strong deterrent, and the US probably supported the exercise willingly because the Harmel formula of détente and deterrence already had been 'invented' by the Acheson Committee, and because it indeed was an opportunity to get the European allies to recommit to the fundamental principles and arrange the principles for cooperation in transatlantic relations.

The West German assertiveness was also curbed during 1967. The Policy Planning Council proposed that German assertiveness could be turned into the NPT framework. Thus, although the nonproliferation scheme was contemplated to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, it also turned out to be yet another framework to tie Germany into. The

nuclear question was also largely resolved with the NPT. In December, 1966, McNamara's NPG had been adopted, and the interpretation of the NPT's article 2 solved the problem with the European clause, and at the same time the American veto was preserved. According to this study, the policy of detachment in the nuclear field was continued.

Although the Soviet invasion of Prague in August, 1968, surprised the administration, the preoccupation with cementing the alliance quickly turned the invasion into an opportunity to induce the allies to contribute to the collective deterrent, the argument that in American thinking deterrence was the primary matter of the Alliance is attempted, and it is proposed that the Soviet invasion served to reconcile the European allies' policy outlooks with that of the US.

The present study is on America's relations with and policies towards the European allies. Although, the intention has not been to neglect the importance of and possible impact on the policies of 'outer' circumstances, the focus of the study is to analyze the transatlantic relations on its own premises, in particular America's perceptions of Western Europe, perceptions which were hardly under the influence of 'outer' circumstances.

Based on this study a few broader conclusions on the Johnson administration's relations to the European allies can be drawn. One is, that the administration was remarkably likeminded. The divergence of views was, in fact, minimal.

Despite the fact that the European allies' policies towards the Eastern bloc, and the movement of realignment vis-à-vis the US was new thinking reflecting a Western Europe's rehabilitation and therefore new status in the world, the American administration maintained the traditional reading of Western Europe's reason of state. Power politics was presumably lurking right under the surface on Western Europe.

By looking at Western Europe through this traditionalist lens, the different political developments in Western Europe and Western Europe's détente policies, in fact, came to be seen as inimical to US interests. What scholars of the European détente movement praise as new political thinking and a necessary pretext for the end of the Cold War, the Johnson administration perceived the Western European détente as potentially inimical to US interests and policies, and in some cases as a policy of the past. Arguably some of the Western European détente policies were realignments in the eyes of the administration.

The traditionalist line of thinking also resulted in general exaggerated and suspicious estimates of possible turn of events in Europe. Arguably, the Johnson administration was in a state of alarm when it came to Western Europe. Traditionalism led the administration base its Western European policy on the fear of a spread of Gaullist thinking. Indeed, the

administration feared a collective Western European rejection of the integration principle, and feared a general turn to European power politics if Gaullist thinking came to rule in Western Europe. Accordingly, the Johnson administration's Western European policies to a large extent aimed at capture and recommit the European allies to principles that counteracted this return. Moreover, the administration displayed certain insecurity about the de Gaulle's intentions. The fear that de Gaulle would use the Harmel study as a pretext to break up the alliance was exaggerated.

The traditionalism also led the administration to largely tailor their Western European policies to the same pattern as the 1940s. Arguably the policy of detachment was a policy in line with the thinking of the late 1940s, namely to protect US unilateralism from Western European entanglement. The policy of detachment was, essentially, the administration's rejection of the European reason of state *anno* the 1960s.

As the analysis shows the US did not follow a policy of involvement, because the strength of traditionalism was overwhelming. The few times the administration posed the principal question whether to abandon the unilateralist position in the Alliance, it was either explicit or implicitly rejected on the ground of a rejection of the European reason of state. US wishes for unilateralism can also be explained by other circumstances than a rejection of the European reason of state; Such as the US were the only power to have the means to go up against the Soviet Union. However, as the present study shows, the preservation of US unilateralism in the relations with the allies was quite often based on a rejection of the European reason of state.

At the same time as the Johnson administration clung to traditional perceptions, Western Europe's impact on America's policies towards the Eastern bloc was quite substantial. Although the Johnson administration had aspirations after a *détente* with the Soviet Union, and arguably had success, the impact from Western Europe on the Western alliance's *détente* policies was substantial. The British and Belgian pushes for a *détente* in the wake of the French withdrawal pushed America to a *détente*. Indeed, the Alliance would probably not have adopted the Harmel formula had America not been pushed by Western Europe throughout the 1960s. In addition, the state of alarm in the administration in its dealings with Western Europe arguably produced a relatively high impact on US policies. Relatively high, because Western European states – even the great powers – was compared to the American superpower small states.

The results of the present study suggest that the transatlantic relations during the 1960s and perhaps even the 1970s rested on an 'internal' transatlantic dynamic and not just on the premises of the Cold

War. However, the present study might also tamper with the rehabilitative beyond Vietnam historiography's conclusions. Arguably, the results to some extent confronts the claim that Johnson administration's détente policy and the reform of NATO was a Johnsonian invention reflecting a certain level of political capability on part of Johnson. Although the present study does not investigate or analyze the motivations and background for the administration's détente policy towards the Soviet Union, the Western European impact on the administration's détente policies cannot be overlooked, nor can the European allies decisive impact on the timing of the reform of NATO and indeed, the very reform of NATO. It takes two to tango, and perhaps the European allies were leading.

In comparison with the Johnson administration's relations with Western Europe, the argument is made that the Nixon administration's relations with Western Europe, despite highly different circumstances, in fact resembled the previous administration's relations. Maintaining US unilateralism in its dealing with the Soviet Union was imperative for the Nixon administration, and the study suggests that a reason for the insistence on unilateralism is a continued rejection of the European reason of state. Arguably, the Nixon administration viewed the allies as 'lesser' in terms of political capabilities. Should archival research confirm this suggestion, the continuum of involvement and detachment may add to the further study of the transatlantic relations.

In principle the continuum of involvement and detachment serves to highlight the processual character of America's policy towards the European allies. The continuum has allowed for identifying the lack of development in US thinking on Western Europe indeed, there was a remarkable similar thinking and policy in the 1960s compared to the late 1940s, despite the fact that the US participated in a reform of NATO that granted the allies more political consultation, and moved the Alliance into the field of détente by adding détente to the Alliance's tasks.

Abstract

Between Involvement and Detachment takes grasp with the Johnson administration's (1963-1969) perceptions of and responses to the Western European realignments. Arguing that the Johnson administration set out to maintain the American unilateralist position in the transatlantic relation, not just as a function of America's position as a superpower, but also as a function of certain historically based Euro-skepticism, the thesis suggests that America's Western European policy can be seen on a continuum of involvement and detachment. Based on archival research, the thesis concludes, that these policies, essentially, were detached as America rejected the European reason of state.

The Western European realignments were recorded in the Johnson administration with de Gaulle's critique of US hegemony in Western Europe in the early 1960s. The thesis argues that the administration to a large extent had a traditional reading of de Gaulle's policies, and feared that if Gaullist thinking spread among the European allies, it would merit to a return to traditional European power politics. The analysis shows that, by 1964 the administration believed, according to this study, that NATO's principle of integration stood between the current 'balanced' Western Europe and the Europe of the pre-War period. In addition the administration held the opinion that the German problem and the Western European détente tampered with the US unilateralism in its relations with the Soviet Union, and its position as the leader of the Western world.

De Gaulle's withdrawal from NATO's integrated command in 1966, and the subsequent British and Belgian calls for a reform of the alliance and a détente with East, contributed to the administration's fear of alliance disintegration and return to European power politics. The thesis argues that the Department of State attempted a 'political bargain', with which the allies would be given political consultation and a détente in return for re-commitment to integration, whereas the Acheson Committee proposed a détente and deterrence formula in NATO to the overcome this perceived alliance disintegration. Thus the US proposed the Harmel formula before Harmel.

In general, the developments in Western Europe put the Johnson administration in a state of alarm, and the European allies therefore had a larger impact on America's policies, except in the essentially detached nuclear policy, which the administration maintained.

Despite changed circumstances, the Nixon administration's relation with and perceptions of the European allies largely resembled the traditionalist view of the Johnson administration.

Resumé

Between Involvement and Detachment omhandler Johnson administrationens (1963-1969) perceptioner af de vesteuropæiske opbrud og de deraf følgende politikker. Der argumenteres for, at Johnson administrationen stræbte efter at bevare den amerikanske unilaterale position i forholdet til de europæiske allierede som følge af en historisk baseret Euro-skepsis, og derfor ikke alene på grund af USA's supermagtsstatus. I afhandlingen foreslås det, at USA's vesteuropapolitik kan ses på et kontinuum fra involvering til distancering. På baggrund af arkivstudier konkluderes, at den amerikanske vesteuropapolitik grundlæggende var distanceret fordi administrationen afviste den europæiske statsræson.

Johnson administrationen observerede de begyndende vesteuropæiske opbrud med de Gaulles anklager om amerikansk hegemoni i Vesteuropa i begyndelsen af 1960'erne. Analysen viser, at administration i vid udstrækning havde en traditionel forståelse af Gaullismen, og at denne frygtede, at hvis Gaullismen spredtes i alliancen ville det svare til en tilbagevenden til den traditionelle europæiske magtbalancepolitik. Der argumenteres i afhandlingen for, at administrationen fra 1964 anså NATO's integrationsprincip, som det eneste der stod imellem den daværende fredelige balance i Vesteuropa og denne tilbagevenden. Ligeledes vises det, at administration mente, at skiftende tyske administrationers genforeningspolitik og den vesteuropæiske detentebestræbelse negativt påvirkede den amerikansk uniliteralisme i relationen med USSR, og USA's position som leder af den vestlige blok.

De Gaulles tilbagetrækning fra NATOs integrerede kommando i 1966 og de følgende britiske og belgiske krav om en reform af alliancen og en detente med Øst, førte til en vis frygt i administrationen for en tilbagevenden til den europæiske magtbalancepolitik. I afhandlingen argumenteres for, at Department of State forsøgte sig med en 'politisk aftale' med hvilken de allierede blev tilbudt politisk konsultation og en detente med Østblokken mod, at man forpligtede sig til integrationsprincippet. Acheson komitéen foreslog en detente og afskrækkelse-formel for at imødegå den formodede alliance disintegration. Med andre ord foreslog Johnson administrationen Harmel formelen inden Harmel.

Generelt førte de vesteuropæiske opbrud til en vis alarmisme i administrationen, og de europæiske allierede havde derfor en relativ større indflydelse på amerikansk udenrigspolitik. Dette gjaldt dog ikke USA's nukleare politik, hvor administrationen fastholdt en distanceret politik.

Til trods for anderledes omstændigheder opretholdt Nixon administrationen i vid udstrækning Johnson administrationens traditionelle syn på de europæiske allierede.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANF – Atlantic Nuclear Force
APAG – Atlantic Policy Advisory Group (NATO)
CSCE – Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
DoD – Department of Defense
EEC – European Economic Community
ENDC – Eighteen Nations Disarmament Convention
EUR – European Desk the Department of State
INR – Bureau of Intelligence and Research (State Department)
MBFR – Mutually Balanced Force Reductions
MLF -- Multilateral Force
MPT – Multilateral Preparatory Talks
NAC – North Atlantic Council (NATO)
NIE – National Intelligence Estimate
NPG – Nuclear Planning Group
NPT – Non Proliferation Treaty
NSA – National Security Advisor (White House)
NSAM – National Security Action Memorandum
NSC – National Security Council
SAC – Strategic Air Command
SALT – Strategic Arms Limitations Talks
SC – Select Committee
S/P – Policy Planning Staff (State Department)
P/C – Policy Planning Council (State Department)
WH – White House